

SEE IT FOR YOURSELF: TWO TICKETS FOR THE PRICE OF ONE FOR **THE AVENGERS**

TOKEN, PAGE 9, THURSDAY REVIEW



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INSIDE: THE ONLY
OFFICIAL UCAS GUIDE
TO UNIVERSITY VACANCIES

BROADSHEET REVIEW

Redford, the
lonely legend

MI5 and CIA accused over death of UN chief

BRITISH, South African and US agents have been implicated in the death in 1991 of the United Nations secretary-general, Dag Hammarskjöld, in letters presented to South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, chairman of the TRC, which is charged with exposing apartheid-era atrocities, yesterday said the letters were only recently uncovered and their veracity had not been determined. Suspicion has always hung over the death of Hammarskjöld, killed with 15 others when their plane exploded just before landing in Northern Rhodesia, now Zambia. He had

BY MARY BRAID
in Johannesburg

been trying to mediate between the Congo and the breakaway province of Katanga. Independent commissions set up by Sweden, the US and Northern Rhodesia concluded pilot error was probably to blame.

The TRC found eight letters implicating the agents during investigations into another matter. They are in the hands of President Nelson Mandela

and the Justice Minister, Dullah Omar, who will decide what should be done with them.

The letters, marked Top Secret, describe meetings between the CIA, MI5 and the South African Institute for Maritime Research (SAIMR). Archbishop Tutu said the latter was believed to be a front company. The correspondence is between two SAIMR employees

who sign themselves Captain and Commodore. It outlines a mission dubbed Operation Celeste to kill Hammarskjöld. One letter says: "It is felt Hammarskjöld should be removed." It also details an alleged meeting between British spies and SAIMR employees. The undated letter says: "Allen Dulles [CIA head] agrees and has promised full co-operation

from his people." According to the letters, TNT was to be planted in the plane's wheel bay. It was expected to explode as the wheels retracted on take-off but after that failed to happen the bomb may have detonated as the plane came down. No motive for the alleged assassination plot is mentioned.

Archbishop Tutu said that while the letters' veracity was

not established, they were being released to maintain the TRC's transparency.

Theories about Hammarskjöld's death emerged days after the crash. Newspapers said Britain was supporting the rebel leader, Moïse Tshombe, and opposed UN policy on Katanga. In 1992, ex-UN officials said mercenaries hired by Belgian, US and British mining

companies shot down the plane, as they believed their businesses would be hurt by Hammarskjöld's peace efforts.

Last night the Foreign Office said: "Intelligence agents of the United Kingdom do not go around bumping people off. At this time ... Soviet misinformation was quite rampant, so (the letters) may have been put out by them."

Screw turns on renegade republicans

AS IRELAND yesterday buried 16 of the 28 people who died in last Saturday's bombing in Omagh, the Dublin government tightened the screw on dissident republican organisations with a package of "draconian" measures.

As Sinn Féin's president, Gerry Adams, and David Trimble, Ulster-Unionist leader and First Minister of the Northern Ireland Assembly, attended the moving funeral of three young boys in Buncrana, the Irish cabinet agreed what the Irish Prime Minister, Bertie Ahern, called a "stringent and hard" response aimed at mopping up the Real IRA. Five new proposed offences, including directing terrorist activity, will be brought before the Dáil in an emergency session in a fortnight.

Security sources hope that a statement from the organisation, which declared a suspension of its violence, would amount to a full ceasefire. But it was made clear that the statement would not deflect the security forces north and south from plans for a determined push against the group.

In the wake of the bombing, suspected members of the organisation are being treated as pariahs, with its alleged leader, Michael McKevitt and his partner, Bernadette Sands-McKevitt, fleeing from their Dundalk home in fear of reprisals.

None the less, there are distinct signs that the Irish government and Sinn Féin, and possibly the British Government, have had contact with them. Such contacts may have helped bring about the suspension announcement.

Mr Ahern said the legislation was "extremely draconian, but I am not prepared to take a

BY DAVID MCKITTRICK
Ireland Correspondent

chance with anything else". He said new offences would be created of directing an unlawful organisation, possessing items for purposes connected with firearms and explosives offences, withholding information, unlawfully collecting information and training people to use firearms or explosives.

New restrictions are to be placed on the right to silence, allowing inferences to be drawn from a suspect's failure to answer police questions. Detention will be allowed for up to 96 hours rather than 48 hours.

British ministers are meanwhile putting together their own package of possible measures, which will include provisions to secure easier convictions on charges of membership of illegal organisations.

Extra security presence has already been put in place on both sides of the border, while anti-terrorist officers from Scotland Yard are helping the Royal Ulster Constabulary investigate into the bombing. Five men arrested earlier this week are still being held for questioning in connection with the incident.

Meanwhile, among the mourners at yesterday's funerals were the Irish President, Mary McAleese, Mr Trimble, the Social Democratic and Labour Party leader, John Hume, and Mr Adams. Those buried included Protestants, Catholics and a Mormon. Among them were a Unionist party official, an official in the Gaelic Athletic Association, a toddler who had survived premature birth and a student who was waiting to hear his GCSE results.

Mr Trimble and Mr Adams came from opposite sides of the political divide to join thousands remembering three young friends at the church of St Mary's in the tiny seaside town of Buncrana, Co Donegal.

In scenes mirrored at funerals for 13 other victims, they crowded lanes around the hilltop church to pray for James Barker and Sean McLoughlin, both 12, and Oran Doherty, eight.

The mourners heard the Catholic Bishop of Derry, the Most Rev Seamus Hegarty, appeal directly to the bombers to repent and "resolve finally to give up their immoral trade in destruction and death, not temporarily or conditionally but permanently, and to seek forgiveness for the atrocity which they have done".

Sinn Féin's chairman, Michael McLoughlin, disclosed that the party had been in contact with the Real IRA through intermediaries to press its demand that the group renounce violence for good. He said: "We did make it known to the group that there was a need to discuss this issue to try to recover the situation from the disastrous consequences of Saturday. There is ongoing work which requires a degree of sensitivity and very, very discreet management."



Sinn Féin's Gerry Adams (right) and Martin McGuinness joined mourners at three boys' funerals in Buncrana yesterday. Paul McErlane

Higher A-level grades start rush for places

A-LEVEL RESULTS, which will be published for about 330,000 candidates today, show the smallest improvement for a decade. But the number of students awarded the highest grades has risen more sharply so the scramble for top universities will be as fierce as ever.

BY JUDITH JUDD
Education Editor

levels' popularity continued to grow, with a rise in entries - 2.7 per cent - greater than the increase in 18-year-olds.

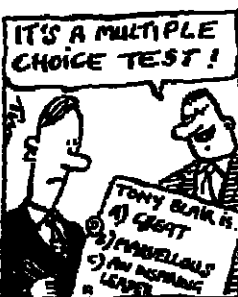
David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, congratulated candidates on their success. He underlined his belief that successive rises in the pass rate did not mean standards were falling. "I am confident that these results reflect real achievement. The exhaustive study undertaken by Ofsted and others found no evidence that standards had fallen," he said.

Directors of leading companies were unconvinced. Ruth Lea, head of the Institute of Directors' policy unit, said: "[Employers] see people coming to them with a fistful of A-levels and even a degree who do not have the basic skills that would make them employable."

Dr Ron McLone, convener of the joint forum for the GCSE and GCE, said changes in results reflected students' ability. "The standard of A-level is constant. It is rather like the London marathon. More people complete it and more complete it faster but that doesn't mean it is getting easier."

Full details, page 4

London mayor wanted. Only brainy need apply



WRITTEN "LOYALTY" and intelligence tests for candidates to be Mayor of London are being devised by the Labour Party in what critics claim is an attempt to block Ken Livingstone from standing for the post.

London Labour Party members reacted with anger yesterday at the news that Millbank officials had finally come up with

BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

a way to "stop Ken". It is understood that all potential candidates for the mayoralty and the 25-seat Greater London Assembly will have to undergo written and oral tests on their "knowledge and communication" of party policy, in a scheme

called Project 99. The project's aim is to have a "good Labour candidate" in every seat.

Party sources said that mayoral hopefuls would face a "scientific" exam paper that would test their ability to master a brief quickly and handle "real-life" crises. Ability to perform on television would also be tested. A National Executive

Committee selection panel would then weed out the candidates with the lowest test scores. The approved shortlist would be put before all party members in London.

Although Mr Livingstone is a consummate media performer, the Brent East MP and former GLC leader has criticised several areas of party policy, from tuition fees for students to the Chancellor's running of the economy.

Geoff Martin, a member of the Labour Campaign for a People's London, said the move was deeply undemocratic.

"They have been trying hard to find a way to knock Ken out of any contest and it looks like this is it."

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JP 11/10/98

The 'Sun' did it. Stalin did it. This is how simple it is to retouch history



On the left is the original image of the Labour leaders with Tom Sawyer. In the doctored version, Mr Sawyer has gone, Robin Cook has been reshuffled and Gordon Brown has put on a smile

IN ORWELL'S 1984, Winston Smith did it for a living. Stalin did it to Trotsky. Ronald Reagan did it to Oliver North. And last week the Sun did it to Shelley Anne Emery and her wheelchair.

When the newspaper excised Ms Emery from a photograph of the England cricket team, it was carrying on a long tradition of picture manipulation that stretches back to the beginnings of photography.

Dictators had a need to alter history, and Stalin managed not only to have Trotsky cut from photographs next to Lenin, but to have himself placed in some to make him look closer to the revolutionary leader than he really was.

After the Iran-Contra scandal broke, the White House's

press office airbrushed Oliver North from a photograph taken with President Reagan in the Oval Office.

Today, such chicanery is no longer the preserve of government propagandists. With the advent of sophisticated computer software and digitised photographs, almost anyone can alter reality. And they can never be detected.

The most famous recent newspaper cases have included the *Guardian* removing a person from behind Gordon Brown's arm on Budget day last year and the *Daily Mirror* creating an embrace between Dodi Fayed and Diana, Princess of Wales, on a yacht

just before they were killed. A computer program called Adobe Photoshop is mainly responsible. At one time only a photographer with colour filters, or a processor, with dark room chemicals, airbrush and scissors, could alter an image.

Now after a little training on Photoshop, editors can do what they like to an image. They can do it quicker and better than processors with years of training were ever able to.

Photoshop was not originally intended for the newspaper industry. It was for artists in advertising and design agencies. By turning a photograph into a digital image, Photoshop allows each component part of it to be played with down to the smallest pixel. The advent of powerful personal computers allowed Photo-



shop to be given to every picture editor on a newspaper.

All the traditional tricks like darkening the background to give the subject more emphasis can be done in seconds and this is regularly done by newspapers. Picture sizes can now

be extended by simply sampling electronically a patch of sky or grass at the edge of the frame and copying it over and over to lengthen the picture. So widespread are these changes that they raise few ethical questions in the minds of picture editors, they do not, after all, alter the meaning of a picture.

More borderline is where a picture is enhanced in the newsroom to make it fit for publication. If a photographer uses a filter to make a sky more dramatic it is considered an element in his craft. It becomes questionable when a desk-based editor, who never saw the original sunset, has a weak picture but uses a computer make the sky more orange and make the image better.

More dangerous is changing the content so that the meaning is changed. Even in pre-digital days newspapers would commonly move people closer together to alter their relationships. All it took was some scissors and tape.

Donald Treford, former editor of the *Observer*, said that lying with pictures was as bad as lying with words if not worse. "People believe that the camera doesn't lie and it is not enough simply to deplore the practice in the industry's code of ethics. A detailed code of acceptable and unacceptable techniques of picture enhancement ought to be drawn up," Mr Treford said.

In the photograph above, we have removed Tom Sawyer, general secretary of the Labour Party, in order to create a picture that shows just the most powerful men in the country. We were even able to make Gordon Brown smile and put a champagne bottle in the picture.

Mr Brown's smile was chosen from *The Independent's* electronic picture library. We

could just have replaced his smile - Photoshop will let you blur the joins using skin tones copied from other parts of an image - but we chose to replace his whole head because his eyes are shut in the original.

Moving Mr Cook was just as easy. We cut around him and dragged him across so he would cover Tom Sawyer. The "background" from where Mr Cook had been was electronically airbrushed with a neutral image.

Only a few years ago, to do what we have done would have cost thousands of pounds and days of computing time. Now, with a £1,200 PC and Photoshop software, anyone can play Stalin, or the Sun, with their own family album.

Leading article, Review, page 3

STRANGE AFFAIR OF THE KISS THAT WASN'T

When the *Mirror* lost out to the *Sunday Mirror* in the bidding war for exclusive photographs of Diana, Princess of Wales, embracing Dodi Fayed the newspaper decided to create its own. Under a headline "Exclusive: The picture they all wanted", the paper showed Mr Fayed and the Princess in an embrace. However, the picture was actually weeks old and to make it work the *Mirror* had been forced to rotate Mr Fayed's head. The *News of the World*, also mocked-up its own version, but did confess to it. The incidents caused the Press Complaints Commission to create specific rules governing the alteration of photographs.



also mocked-up its own version, but did confess to it. The incidents caused the Press Complaints Commission to create specific rules governing the alteration of photographs.



ODD BUSINESS OF THE MISSING BUDGET DAY FIGURE

The Government decided to try to manipulate images of Budget day last year by refusing to allow the Chancellor's traditional No.11 Downing Street photocall to be taken with Gordon Brown on his own. Instead a group of young people, intended to represent the theme of the Budget, surrounded the Chancellor in all photographs except one in the *Guardian*. The *Guardian* decided on some image management of its own and removed the top of a woman's head from behind the Chancellor's elbow to give a more aesthetically pleasing picture. It was forced to reprint the photograph and apologised to its readers the next day.



It was forced to reprint the photograph and apologised to its readers the next day.



SINISTER CASE OF THE PURGED COMRADE

Stalin's propagandists became well-practised in the art of forgery because of the large number of people who became non-persons under the dictator. Most famously he had the exiled Trotsky removed from photographs showing him with Lenin. To encourage a cult of his own personality, and to bolster his part in the 1918 revolution, he also had himself placed in photographs with Lenin. Nikolai Yezhov, who was removed from this photo of Stalin, Molotov and Voloshinov, was head of the notorious NKVD secret police from 1936 to 1938 and was himself executed in 1940.



Yezhov, who was removed from this photo of Stalin, Molotov and Voloshinov, was head of the notorious NKVD secret police from 1936 to 1938 and was himself executed in 1940.



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Butcher blamed for E.coli deaths

THE BUTCHER John Barr was accused yesterday of "deliberate deception" and dishonesty which led to unnecessary deaths by an inquiry into the 21 Scottish deaths caused by the world's worst outbreak of *E. coli* O157 food poisoning.

Sheriff Principal Graham Cox, in the report from the fatal accident inquiry, ruled that had Mr Barr responded "fully and honestly" with officials investigating the November 1996 outbreak, then six

BY CHARLES ARTHUR
Technology Editor

lives might have been saved, because the supply of cold meats to wholesalers could have been prevented.

But experts warned yesterday that another such tragedy is inevitable unless standards are improved. "The Lanarkshire case is not an isolated one and is really the tip of the iceberg," said Dr Richard North, who was an expert witness at

the inquiry. "There are a great many other cases out there which go undetected and we need to look at the whole system of food hygiene controls in this country."

Paul Santoni, a lawyer representing the family of Alex Gardiner, 60, one of the victims, welcomed the apportioning of blame in the report. He said: "There appears to have been an ethos of 'no blame, no responsibility' from John Barr and North Lanarkshire Council. In

my view North Lanarkshire Council reacted negatively against all our criticisms made during the inquiry."

"Hopefully now from this disaster we may have learning and successes in combating and controlling future episodes, otherwise the deaths and subsequent pain and suffering will be doubly wasted."

All of the dead came from Lanarkshire and central Scotland. They included pensioners who had attended the same

church lunch and residents of a nursing home at Banknock in central Scotland. The sheriff said they died after "indignified and often very painful illness".

In a withering attack both on Mr Barr and on the practices used at his shop, the sheriff said that at the 37-day inquiry Mr Barr had been untruthful "whenever it suited him". He added: "I have no doubt Mr John Barr liked a clean shop and maintained a clean shop."

What he failed to do was to maintain a safe shop and the main ingredient of his failure was ignorance of the requirements which would produce that result."

He had paid "lip service" to environmental health officers (EHOs) visiting his shop and concealed the full extent of his business, which also supplied meat to supermarkets. But the EHOs were also criticised for failing to spot the hazards inherent in the operation of the premises.

The inquiry ruled that there were five key failures which led to the outbreak. There was inadequate training of staff at Mr Barr's shop in Caledonian Road, Wishaw, implicated in the outbreak.

There was also a failure to use temperature probes for cooking raw meat, a failure to draw up cleaning schedules to reduce the risk of contamination at the premises and a failure to separate completely within the premises processes

relating to raw meat and cooked meat.

In particular, ruled the sheriff, there was a failure to provide separate knives and equipment for each of the separate processes. The butcher's shop also failed to provide clear management structures and "adequate supervision" to enforce safety measures.

Yesterday Mr Barr said through his representatives that he had no immediate comment to make on the findings.

A-level results: Students turning to vocational subjects, while standards in art schools come under attack

Exams show past is history

BY BEN RUSSELL
Education Correspondent

YOUNGSTERS ARE increasingly turning to subjects such as computing, media studies and sport at A-level, at the expense of some traditional subjects, nationwide exam results reveal today.

The results, which give the first detailed information on pupils' choice of subjects, show entries for computing were up 22 per cent, while those for media and television studies and sport rose by nearly 17 per cent. Business studies and general studies entries were up by 10 per cent.

Conventional academic A-levels in disciplines such as history, French and economics all declined in popularity, at a time when the total number of A-level entries has increased.

The number taking English A-levels also declined, although exam boards put the fall down to the effects of a one-year blip in English entries last year.

The figures echo the trend in university applications, revealed last week, which showed a large rise in the popularity of job-related degrees such as business studies, computing and accountancy.

Science subjects, however, held up, with entries for maths, physics, chemistry and biology all rising in line with the national increase in A-level entries.

Despite the growth of newer disciplines, traditional courses still dominate.

But John Sutton, general secretary of the Secondary Heads Association, warned: "The decrease in the number taking most foreign languages is a cause for concern, particularly because of the long-term implications for recruiting teachers of those subjects, who are already in short supply. The significant decline in the numbers taking history will also concern those who value the discipline and methodology of historical study."

English remained the most popular A-level, with 94,000 entries, followed by general studies. Mathematics was third most popular with 70,000 entries. Chemistry, biology, geography, history and physics are still in the top 10, although business studies has crept into eighth place.

Home economics was the least popular of the mainstream exams with only 2,418 entries, a slight fall.

Dr Ron McLone, convenor of the Joint Forum for the GCSE and GCE, which represents A-level exam boards, said: "The main subjects remain popular because there is great strength in these subjects in schools and colleges."

"Other subjects where we see large rises in entries reflect social changes. It isn't surprising that there is a rise in computing or that there is great stress on business studies."

HOW THE SUBJECTS COMPARE
Grades A to E represent A-level passes; grades N and grade U fail (grade N was originally equivalent to an O-level). The figures in brackets are the final 1997 results. Where necessary, grade percentages have been rounded to add up to 100.

Subject	A	B	C	D	E	N	U	No sat
Art and Design	23.1 (21.0)	20.6 (20.4)	24.0 (24.3)	17.9 (19.1)	9.9 (10.2)	3.3 (3.9)	1.2 (1.1)	37,119 (35,508)
Biology	15.9 (14.9)	19.3 (19.6)	19.2 (19.2)	17.5 (17.7)	14.0 (14.7)	8.0 (8.7)	6.1 (5.2)	58,457 (56,706)
Business Studies	8.2 (7.7)	19.1 (19.2)	24.1 (23.5)	20.6 (21.2)	14.0 (14.8)	8.1 (8.6)	5.9 (5.0)	37,008 (33,458)
Chemistry	23.0 (21.4)	21.2 (21.6)	18.6 (18.3)	14.7 (14.8)	11.1 (12.0)	6.9 (7.2)	4.5 (4.7)	43,030 (42,262)
Classical subjects	25.9 (24.5)	22.2 (22.1)	19.9 (21.0)	15.4 (15.6)	9.3 (8.9)	4.4 (4.4)	2.9 (3.5)	6,610 (7,125)
Communication studies	12.2 (12.5)	19.1 (18.6)	16.4 (17.6)	17.0 (17.1)	14.7 (14.6)	9.8 (9.4)	10.8 (10.2)	4,911 (5,164)
Computing	8.3 (9.9)	13.7 (13.0)	20.8 (18.3)	20.5 (20.2)	17.3 (17.4)	10.6 (11.1)	8.8 (10.1)	14,643 (11,986)
Economics	18.0 (16.6)	18.1 (17.3)	19.2 (18.8)	17.1 (18.1)	12.7 (13.4)	8.0 (8.1)	6.9 (7.7)	18,670 (20,765)
English	14.9 (14.6)	19.1 (19.0)	22.9 (23.1)	21.3 (21.5)	13.7 (14.1)	5.6 (5.5)	2.5 (2.2)	94,099 (95,223)
Expressive arts	10.6 (10.3)	16.5 (16.9)	25.1 (24.0)	22.9 (21.5)	13.3 (15.1)	6.7 (7.2)	4.9 (5.0)	11,403 (10,826)
French	21.6 (20.6)	20.7 (20.5)	19.6 (19.9)	17.3 (16.8)	11.6 (12.2)	6.2 (6.6)	3.0 (3.4)	23,633 (25,881)
General studies	13.0 (13.6)	16.6 (16.4)	20.3 (18.8)	19.5 (19.6)	15.2 (15.8)	9.0 (9.6)	6.4 (6.2)	80,570 (73,185)
Geography	15.0 (12.0)	22.3 (22.1)	23.5 (23.3)	18.6 (19.4)	12.0 (13.3)	6.0 (6.9)	2.6 (3.0)	44,881 (43,808)
German	26.7 (24.4)	19.1 (19.3)	19.8 (18.5)	15.4 (15.6)	10.6 (12.0)	5.7 (6.3)	2.7 (2.9)	10,192 (10,440)
History	15.4 (14.9)	19.5 (19.2)	20.7 (20.7)	18.7 (18.6)	12.8 (13.4)	7.0 (7.3)	5.9 (5.9)	40,495 (42,706)
Home economics	10.4 (9.7)	17.2 (17.5)	22.1 (21.7)	21.4 (22.1)	14.3 (15.1)	8.4 (8.0)	6.2 (5.9)	2,418 (2,512)
Law	11.2 (11.4)	12.3 (12.5)	17.2 (16.7)	17.0 (17.0)	15.4 (15.6)	11.4 (11.0)	15.5 (15.8)	10,885 (11,571)
Maths	28.0 (27.8)	19.1 (20.3)	16.7 (17.3)	13.9 (14.1)	10.6 (10.4)	6.5 (5.1)	5.2 (5.0)	70,554 (68,880)
Media/Film/TV studies	10.6 (10.9)	16.1 (17.4)	28.6 (28.4)	24.9 (24.2)	13.0 (12.6)	4.3 (4.3)	2.5 (2.2)	13,545 (11,581)
Music	19.5 (19.5)	20.5 (20.8)	23.5 (23.9)	19.0 (18.7)	10.8 (10.8)	4.5 (4.5)	2.2 (1.8)	7,012 (6,951)
Other Modern Languages	32.4 (30.7)	25.7 (23.9)	18.6 (17.2)	11.4 (12.6)	6.0 (7.0)	3.0 (4.2)	2.9 (4.4)	5,157 (5,522)
Physics	22.4 (21.6)	20.8 (21.6)	18.6 (18.4)	15.5 (15.5)	11.2 (11.5)	7.1 (7.0)	4.4 (4.4)	34,244 (33,243)
Political studies	17.9 (14.7)	21.7 (23.9)	23.2 (23.5)	17.8 (18.3)	10.3 (10.8)	5.3 (5.6)	3.8 (3.2)	10,051 (10,825)
Psychology	11.1 (10.9)	16.7 (17.4)	20.2 (19.4)	18.8 (18.5)	14.9 (14.5)	10.5 (9.4)	7.8 (9.9)	29,796 (27,999)
Religious studies	14.9 (14.5)	21.2 (19.3)	22.1 (24.0)	19.1 (20.4)	12.0 (12.4)	6.0 (5.6)	4.7 (3.8)	9,138 (9,412)
Science	11.7 (11.3)	16.1 (15.7)	20.9 (20.1)	23.1 (22.3)	16.5 (17.0)	7.8 (8.7)	3.9 (4.9)	5,246 (5,353)
Sociology	12.1 (11.5)	18.0 (16.6)	19.4 (16.4)	16.6 (16.9)	14.1 (15.3)	10.7 (9.6)	9.1 (13.7)	26,242 (28,337)
Spanish	24.8 (25.0)	22.6 (22.3)	20.0 (19.2)	15.0 (15.9)	9.8 (9.2)	4.5 (5.1)	3.3 (3.3)	5,653 (5,606)
Sport/PE studies	8.1 (7.1)	12.4 (13.9)	22.3 (22.1)	25.6 (26.0)	19.7 (19.2)	8.9 (8.6)	3.0 (4.0)	14,628 (12,449)
Technology subjects	12.2 (12.9)	13.9 (15.1)	23.4 (24.3)	22.6 (22.7)	16.3 (14.7)	7.6 (7.1)	4.0 (3.2)	13,316 (11,680)
Welsh	18.5 (18.6)	22.6 (24.7)	23.7 (23.7)	20.8 (17.5)	9.4 (12.3)	3.7 (2.7)	1.3 (0.5)	953 (957)
All other subjects	13.4 (13.7)	17.6 (17.5)	20.1 (18.1)	16.5 (16.7)	12.2 (13.5)	7.9 (7.8)	12.3 (12.7)	9,703 (9,789)
TOTAL	16.8 (16.2)	18.9 (19.0)	20.8 (20.5)	18.3 (18.5)	13.0 (13.4)	7.2 (7.2)	5.0 (5.2)	794,262 (777,710)

Science includes all science subjects except Biology, Chemistry and Physics.
Other Modern Languages includes all languages except French, German, Spanish and Welsh.

Entrants to AS-level examinations, the equivalent of half a conventional A-level, suffered a decline of just over 1 per cent.

The exams, due to be re-launched in 2000, have become less and less popular. Only five subjects, maths, general studies, psychology, computing and biology, attracted more than 3,000 candidates.

David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said there

was an urgent need to change the "excessively narrow" sixth form curriculum.

He said: "The explosive growth of general studies, which on current trends will shortly overtake English as the most popular subject, demonstrates that schools are crying out for a broader curriculum."

This year's AS results show they have clearly failed to bring out the necessary broadening. Professor Alan Smithers of

Liverpool University said entries in subjects such as physics and chemistry were rising in line with an increase in the number of 18-year-olds.

Today's pass-rate figures are provisional, and could be changed by appeals.

Mathematics proved the top-performing course again this year, with nearly 30 per cent of candidates gaining an A, slightly up on last year. Modern languages also produced a large

crop of A grades, with around a quarter of candidates gaining As in German, Spanish and a range of other languages.

But there was a wide variation in performance. Newer subjects yielded much smaller proportions of top grades: only around 8 per cent got an A in sport or computing.

Bethan Marshall, Review, page 5
Education section, Review, pages 14-15



Wallace and Gromit's creator, Nick Park, has condemned art schools' standards

Students of animation learn the wrong skills

THE LEADERS of a prestigious animation course set up by the makers of Wallace and Gromit yesterday condemned the standards in art schools.

They said that graduates of specialised animation courses lacked the skills even to start training, let alone to go into industry.

Lecturers running the prestigious six-month post-graduate course at the University of the West of England, in Bristol, say standards are so low they cannot even fill the handful of vacancies on offer.

Of the 80 British applicants for this year's course only five were up to scratch, even though three-quarters had already completed specialised animation degrees. The university has extended the applications deadline in the hope that more applicants come forward.

Susannah Shaw, the course leader, said: "We have great difficulty in finding candidates of a good enough quality to get into

our training courses. It's not their fault; they have gone into courses hoping to be trained up in animation and they are not getting the training."

She said the growing British animation industry faced losing work overseas because of the shortage of skilled staff.

The course, the first of its kind, was set up two years ago by the university and Aardman Animations, the Bristol studio where double Oscar-winner Nick Park produced the hugely successful Wallace and Gromit trilogy.

Aardman and other leading animation studios wanted a course to train animators for the painstaking task of creating the thousands of movements which make up animated films. But course leaders say that while degrees cover ideas, scripts and storyboards, they ignore the practical training central to the animator's craft.

Mark Taylor, a director of Bristol-based studio A for Animation, which is also a partner in the course, said: "This is damaging us because we can't find the people we want to fit into the studio."

Mr Taylor, whose studio has produced programmes and advertisements for ITV and for satellite television, added: "Too many courses do not have the people in place and do not teach the necessary skills."

Stuart Bartholomew, principal of Bournemouth and Poole College of Art and Design, which has been running animation courses for 15 years, said the complaints were "half right", but insisted that courses gave a solid grounding in basic skills.

He said: "We spend a lot of time to get the students to achieve a high level of visualisation. You need expertise in figure drawing and the way a figure moves."

"If you don't have that, you are not going to be an animator."

EXCLUSIVE UCAS LISTINGS

EXCLUSIVE OFFICIAL listings of university course vacancies from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service are published in *The Independent* today.

They are the essential guide for students who still have to find a university place after receiving their A-level results. Every year thousands of students use the lists to enter the Ucas clearing service, which matches students with unfilled university places. The lists will be published most days until 11 September in *The Independent* and *The Independent on Sunday*.

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McKevitt family in hiding deny role in bomb

THE REPUBLICAN McKevitt family of Dundalk, who have been linked by newspapers in Britain and Ireland with the Real IRA and the Omagh bomb attack, have moved out of their home for fear of reprisals.

Michael McKevitt, who has been repeatedly accused of being the former IRA quarter-master-general who founded and led the Real IRA, has denied any connection with the Omagh bombing. His partner, Bernadette Sands-McKevitt, is said to be terrified that she and her children might be attacked.

Ms Sands-McKevitt yesterday appeared on a popular Irish radio phone-in programme to assure listeners: "I don't agree with violence such as we have witnessed. I would prefer we see this done by peaceful means."

The comments from the couple coincide with two statements from the Real IRA. The first of these indicated that its campaign would continue while the second announced that "all military operations have been suspended". Taken in conjunction, all of this suggests disarray in the ranks, though there are real hopes in security circles that the second announcement may signal a genuine ceasefire.

A Dundalk priest, Father Desmond Campbell, revealed that Ms Sands-McKevitt had telephoned him on Sunday after he said during mass that it was disturbing to know that the chief suspect for the Omagh attack lived in his parish.

He said that Ms Sands-McKevitt, sister of the IRA hunger-strike martyr Bobby Sands, wept uncontrollably during the conversation, adding: "She was crying so much she could hardly speak. She told me she was afraid for herself and her children. She said she was frightened because there was a march planned and she was afraid that somebody would hurt her children."

"It was a despairing thing when they rang me. She broke down and cried and said, 'We are terribly upset about what is

BY DAVID MCKINTYRICK
Ireland Correspondent

taking place. It is my children. I am frightened out of my life that they will do something to my three children. They are supposed to be converging here on the home and I am worried sick."

Fr Campbell added that Mr McKevitt then took the phone and told him he had "no hand, act or part" in the Omagh bombing. He said Mr McKevitt told him: "The first I knew about it was when I was listening to the news on Saturday evening, and it came on. That was the first I knew about this bomb that went off in Omagh, and I had nothing whatsoever to do with it."

A more composed Ms Sands-McKevitt said on RTE radio yesterday that she did not know why she and her husband had been singled out by the media. Of the bombing she said: "It is condemned. We will not condone it. The loss of innocent lives cannot be justified. I don't agree with violence such as we have witnessed. I would prefer we see this done by peaceful means, because that is the only way forward."

Ms Sands-McKevitt, a leading member of the 32 County Sovereignty Committee, added: "As a committee, that is what we are trying to do. What I am saying is that there are always people who have been engaged in violence."

"If we don't address the problem how are we going to solve it. The Good Friday agreement fell short of addressing the problem."

She added that she was sure the people behind the bombing would be brought to justice.

Residents of Dundalk are to stage a rally on Saturday in an effort to dissociate the town from violence. One of the organisers, solicitor John Woods, said: "This is a town that has suffered greatly. We will not have it that people will portray the image of Dundalk as a politically violent town - the El Paso image."



A coffin of one of the three boys from Buncrana killed in the Omagh bomb on Saturday is taken to the graveyard for burial at St Mary's church

Ian Waldie/Reuters

Three little boys buried by thousands

BUNCRAHA is a beautiful seaside town on the Donegal coastline, a town not readily associated with images of devastation, words of indescribable grief.

But yesterday it was witness to "a land of dark shadow and of appalling pain", as the parish priest, Fr Shane Bradley, struggled to find words to describe the terrible occasion, the funeral of three young boys: "It is an eerie, eerie place, lonely desolate and full of inconsolable torment," he said. "It is a place no one, no one absolutely no one should ever have to visit."

Thousands of people, far more than the 4,000 who live in Buncrana, turned out to say their final farewells to Sean McLaughlin, 12, James Barker, 12, and Oran Doherty, who was just eight. Among those who congregated at St Mary's Church were David Trimble,

BY KIM SENGUPTA
in Buncrana

the Ulster Unionist leader and First Minister of the Ulster Assembly, and the Sinn Féin leaders Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness.

Also there was the Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon and the Irish President Mary McAleese who, two months ago, received a "poem of peace" written by Sean and his classmates. Yesterday one of them read the poem out during the Mass. Called "The Bridge", it read:

Orange and green - it doesn't matter
United now
Don't shatter our dream
Scatter the seeds of peace over our land
So we can travel
Hand in hand across the bridge of hope

There was also a group from Celtic Football Club, including their Danish international player Marc Rieper, and two other players. Little Oran had been a fervent Celtic fan, he was buried in a Celtic jersey and his coffin was draped with a Celtic flag.

Children walked hand in hand with their mothers and fathers, they carried flowers and they cried.

Friends and fellow pupils of the boys lined the long drive into the church. Uncomplainingly they waited for two hours in the rain and cold wind waiting for the funeral cortege to arrive. When it did, and the three small coffins were carried out, there were more tears.

Fr Bradley, in his address, reminded those present that along with the three boys, Buncrana had also lost two Spanish visitors, Fernando Blasco,

12, and Rocio Abad, 23. Two others remain in hospital.

The mourners were told that death "was no respecter of age". But no one tried to hide that these lives had been taken by the deliberate actions of men.

Fr Bradley said: "We got here against our will as a result of a terrifying evil act, as people who seem to have such a distorted grip on reality that they thought that their cause could be furthered by the planting of this bomb."

"Their action has not only wounded over 200 people and caused emotional havoc for them and thousands of others, but has also brought our Spanish visitors and ourselves to this brutal place. I can only pray that they see what they have done and repent."

The Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, the Most Rev Seamus

Heggarty, also made it plain who the community holds responsible for the atrocity.

He said of the bombers: "I want them to hear this call. I ask them to repent, to resolve finally to give up their immoral trade in destruction and death, not temporarily or conditionally but permanently and seek forgiveness for what they have done."

The Bishop ended by welcoming Mr Trimble and Mr Mallon and telling them how the people were depending on them to build on the Good Friday peace agreement.

He said: "We are relying on you and on your colleagues in the Assembly to continue to build on the gains which have been made. It's the only alternative, there is no other. We wish you well and a fair wind in all your endeavours."

Those inside the church and

thousands outside greeted this with prolonged applause.

After the hymns and prayers in English, Gaelic and Spanish the three small bodies were carried to their graves by their weeping relations.

As the coffins were taken from the church, James's mother reached out sobbing to touch her son's coffin. She was comforted by her husband, Victor, and daughter Estella, 14.

The family moved to Donegal from Surrey in March because they wanted a better quality of life. The burials took place in graves side by side filled with lilies, hydrangeas, and daisies with the sun breaking through the mist of the Illies Hills over the town. "It's such a lovely spot, they will be at peace here," said an elderly lady and wiped her eyes.

Bishop Heggarty's sermon, Review, page 4

A tiny white box that held the mortal remains of baby Breda

THERE WAS no need for pallbearers, no need for bury men to shoulder the weight of the coffin. Rather, Paul Devine simply lifted from the hearse the tiny, white box containing the body of his daughter Breda, placed it carefully under one arm and stepped into the stillness of the church.

Breda, aged just 20 months, was the second youngest of the Omagh victims and had been in town with her mother, Tracey, when the bomb exploded. With Tracey's brother, Garry McGillion, and his fiancée, Donna Marie Keys, they had been shopping in Omagh, 20 miles away, for the couple's wedding - planned for this coming Saturday - at which Breda

BY ANDREW BUNCOME
in Angharack

was to have been the flower-girl. She needed new shoes.

Hundreds of mourners - among them the Social Democratic and Labour Party leader, John Hume, and Mary Wallace, representing the Irish Prime Minister, Bertie Ahern - packed into St Mary's Church in the tiny hamlet of Angharack, Co Tyrone, yesterday morning to watch Mr Devine carry out his final, sad duty for his daughter. His wife, Mr McGillion and Ms Keys were not among the mourners. All three are still in Belfast's Queen Victoria Hospital recovering from the injuries they received in last Saturday's

blast. Mrs Devine, 29, is still critically ill with 60 per cent burns and is under heavy sedation. It is not known if she has yet been told about her daughter.

Yesterday's funeral procession had begun at the family home, two miles across the hillside, and the cortege twisted awkwardly down narrow lanes towards the church like a slow, black snake. When it reached the church, it passed a guard of honour made up of boys from the Clann na nGael under-12s Gaelic football team.

The slight boys, all in their football jerseys, looked too young for such a rough game, never mind a funeral. But the community of Angharack and the surrounding hamlets is

close-knit, although spread out across the Sperrin mountains, and the Devine family were at the centre of it. Young and old alike were at yesterday's funeral and, as Mr Devine was assistant coach of the local under-12s team, perhaps it was only natural the boys were there too, however incongruous it appeared.

The talk yesterday was of evil. The bomb in Omagh had been an "evil of the most horrifying and obscene nature", said Dr Edward Daly, the retired Bishop of Derry, who presided over the funeral mass. "The unspeakable deeds of those cruel murderers has caused an avalanche of tears and grief... It was an attack on

a family and everything we hold dear," he said. "We have had enough of conflict. Two generations have known nothing else."

Breda was the youngest of Mr Devine's four children. She had been born prematurely and the first few months of her short life had been a desperate struggle. Yesterday, there were thanks for the time she had had. And, as the rain fell on a dark, damp day of high summer, there were prayers, too, for the killers. "For Breda, her short life is over through this cruel action of a stranger," said the parish priest, Father George Doherty. "May God forgive him for his terrible sin and convert him from killing to loving."

Mother of 11 who died on birthday

THE PEOPLE of Northern Ireland buried 16 of their dead yesterday, including 65-year-old Mary Grimes, the oldest victim of the Omagh bomb, and 20-month-old Breda Devine, who was one of the youngest.

Mrs Grimes was one of three generations of the same family murdered in Saturday's blast. The funerals of her daughter, Avril Monaghan, who was pregnant with twins, and of her 18-month-old grand-daughter, Maura, took place on Tuesday.

As she was laid to rest yesterday in her home village of Beragh, near Omagh, the Archbishop of Armagh, Sean Brady,

BY KATHY MARKS

told mourners to resist the temptation to give in to despair.

"That would be the final surrender to those who instil terror and inflict violence," Archbishop Brady, leader of the Catholic Church in Ireland, said during a requiem mass.

Mrs Grimes, who was married to a dairy farmer and had 11 children, was celebrating her 65th birthday on the day she died.

In Omagh itself, hundreds of mourners lined both sides of a street outside the home of a father and son killed by the

bomb. The coffins of 60-year-old Fred White and his son Bryan, 26, were carried out of the family home side by side.

The mourners walked slowly behind the two caskets as the cortege wound its way away from the house, towards the tiny Creevan Presbyterian Church just a couple of miles away. The two men were buried at the Old Drumragh cemetery.

Among the mourners were the First Minister, David Trimble, and his fellow Ulster Unionists Ken Maginnis and Willie Thompson. Fred White had been a member of the party. At the funeral service, the

Rev Arthur O'Neill described the bombing as "an act of medieval savagery".

Meanwhile, on the outskirts of Omagh, more than 300 people gathered in a small Church of Ireland church to pay respects to 15-year-old Lorraine Wilson, an Oxford shop volunteer.

Lorraine's coffin was carried to the edge of the estate where she lived and then driven through the devastated town to Cappagh parish church, in the surrounding countryside.

The Right Rev Dr James Meagher, Bishop of Derry and Rathoe, told the congregation

that she had been an example to others in the way that she had given her time so freely for charity.

Alan Radford, 16, was another Omagh High School pupil who was buried yesterday. He had been due to collect his GCSE results yesterday. His father, Melvin Radford, 53, a former soldier who survived an IRA attack, travelled to North-east Ireland from his home in South Yorkshire to attend the funeral.

Mr Radford was critically injured 10 years ago when a terrorist bomb ripped through his unmarked Army van.

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Dome may drop zone for religion

A SECTION of the Millennium Dome dedicated to religion might have to be scrapped if a sponsor is not found, the organisers said yesterday. An alternative plan being considered is to use part of the project's contingency fund to finance a drastically scaled-down plan for the spiritual zone.

The funding crisis is putting under threat the plan for the spiritual section of the Dome, which was agreed by the 25-member Lambeth Group of religious advisers to the Millennium project. It includes a pyramid-like spiritual place for contemplation and a "pilgrim's progress" walkway, illustrating the history of religions in Western civilisation.

Liam Kane, managing director of the New Millennium Experience Company, admitted yesterday that it was proving more difficult to find a sponsor for the spiritual zone than for any of the other 13 in the Dome. Each zone sponsor is asked for £12m.

"The design we have is wonderful. It will provide a moment

**BY LOUISE JURY
and CLARE GARNER**

of tranquillity in the midst of what will be a fairly exciting day" he said.

"We haven't given up hope of delivering it, but it's a difficult one. I say a prayer every night which relates to finding a sponsor for the spiritual zone."

A spokesman said the company would ask religious foundations, charitable organisations and wealthy individuals for support before it considered using its £80m contingency money.

He said the company intended to find a sponsor for the zone, which has been designed by the architect Eva Jiricna. "This time last year people were saying we wouldn't get sponsors for the other zones. But if we didn't, the design would have to change. You could have an exploration of religion at the beginning of the new millennium, but you wouldn't have this beautiful structure."

The problems for the spiri-

tual zone were detailed yesterday as Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, announced that at least one spiritual aspect of the millennium celebrations would go ahead. A major church service in each of the four countries of the United Kingdom will be broadcast simultaneously live on television from London, Cardiff, Edinburgh and somewhere in Northern Ireland.

Reporting on the more commercial progress of the Dome project, Mr Kane confirmed it would create 5,000 jobs and up to 40,000 people were expected to apply for them. To ensure they have enough skilled workers, the company is to guarantee an interview to anyone who participates in a pre-employment training scheme leading to technical and trade qualifications. Mr Kane said more than £100m sponsorship was now pledged, although the names of the new donors were not revealed. The five principal sponsors so far are BP, Tesco, Marks & Spencer, BSkyB and Mannover.



Searching for truffles – taste variations are probably due to environment rather than inherited traits, scientists have discovered *Denis Cameron*

Black outlook for the truffle

THE BLACK truffle – one of the world's most revered culinary delicacies – is more vulnerable to extinction than scientists realised because it has almost zero genetic variation to protect it against disease.

French scientists have discovered that the fungus is highly inbred and probably derives from less than 100 ancestors which survived the last Ice Age about 10,000 years ago.

The lack of genetic variation means that the differences in taste and aroma of black truffles, which are found in France, Spain and Italy, are probably due to the various habitats in which they grow rather than inherited traits.

Dr Michel Raymond, a geneticist at the University of Montpellier, said the black truffle has declined significantly this century because of the destruction of the woodlands where it grows underground in a complicated lifecycle.

At the turn of the century

BY STEVE CONNOR
Science Editor

about 1,000 tons of black truffles were collected each year in France. This has now fallen to fewer than 30 tons a year. Dr. Raymond says in the current issue of the journal *Nature*.

The last population bottleneck occurred after the last Ice Age, which had nearly forced the black truffle into extinction. The decline accounts for why present-day truffles are so genetically uniform, Dr Raymond said. "If there is an attack of disease in truffles this could make them theoretically more vulnerable," he said.

Scientists could discover why some truffles are tastier than others by looking at differences in the soil and general environment where they grow, he said. "Research is needed to identify the environmental variables that affect the black truffle's perfume and taste, which are the objects of intense human interest."

IN BRIEF

Abuse inquiry seeks former residents of children's home

POLICE INVESTIGATING allegations of abuse at a former children's home in Wales are trying to track down more than 7,000 former residents. Eleven allegations of abuse have been made against former staff members at the Ty Mawr Home in Abergavenny, South Wales. Police have not ruled out the existence at some time of a paedophile ring.

■ Former residents can contact Gwent Police on a special incident room number - 01633 642531.

Heart unit escapes fire damage

A TOP hospital's heart transplant programme should not be affected by a suspected arson attack that wrecked four operating theatres, authorities said last night. The fire at Manchester's Wythenshawe Hospital on Tuesday night is the third in three weeks. But chief executive Jane Herbert said the nearby theatre which performs about 75 heart transplants a year survived with less damage.

Search for divers called off

THE SEARCH for two divers who disappeared while exploring a shipwreck was called off yesterday. John Watts, 50, from Desford, Leicestershire, and Robert Hadfield, 20, from Lichfield, Staffordshire, failed to resurface after exploring the wreck of the *Maldavia*, 25 miles south of Littlehampton, West Sussex, on Monday.

Bunnies granted reprieve

A MILLION rabbits were yesterday granted a reprieve from extermination by cyanide gas thanks to town hall red tape. Tourism chiefs in Eastbourne announced they are to postpone a cull on the South Downs until next year.

Driving ban for Jamiroquai singer

JAY KAY, of the group Jamiroquai, was banned from driving for six weeks yesterday by Beaconsfield magistrates. The singer, 28, drove at 111mph in his Ferrari in May this year, as he raced home to confront a stalker.

BIDISHA

'Oxbridge seems strangely opposed to making life fairer for its students'

— THE THURSDAY REVIEW, PAGE 4 —

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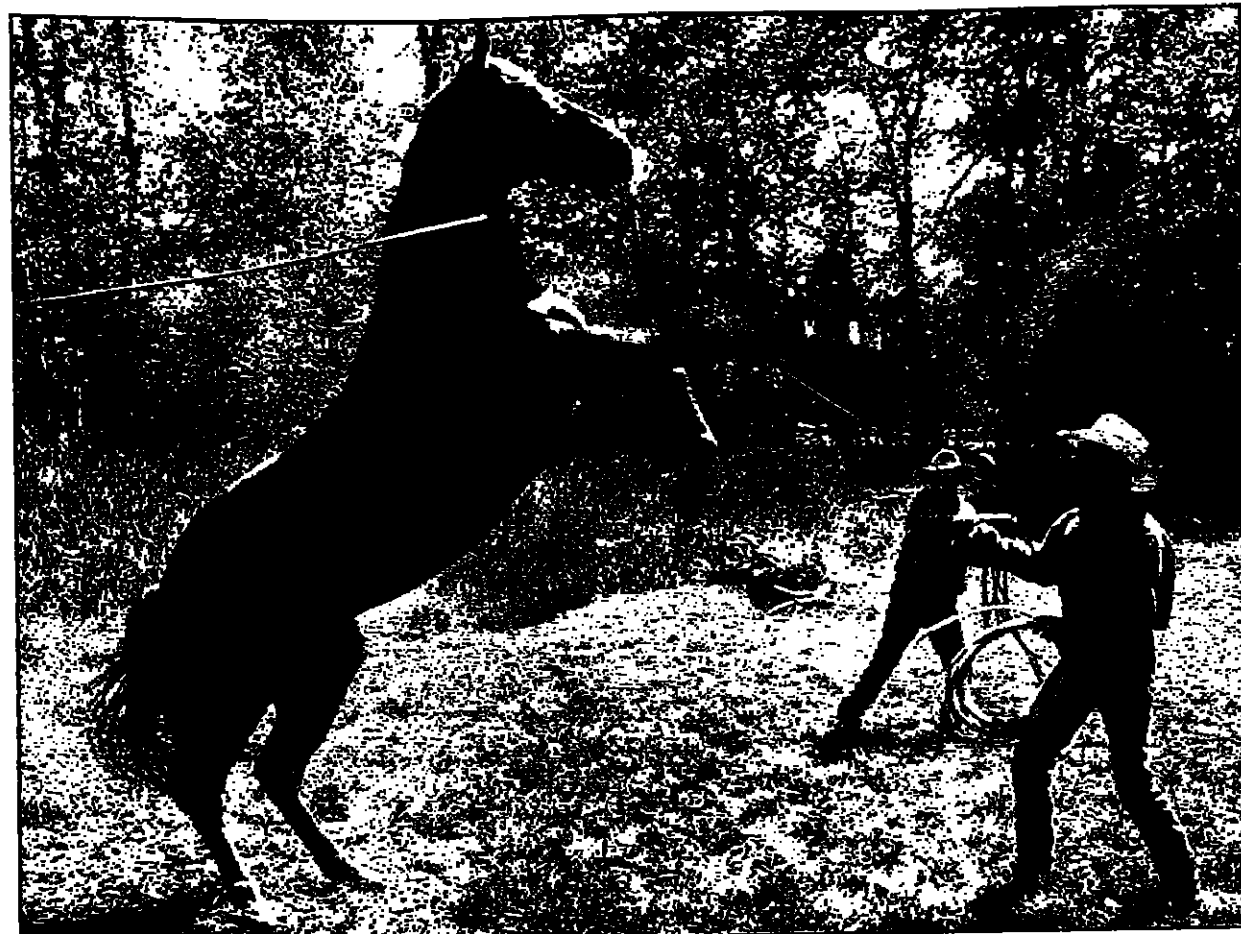
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Robert Redford as Tom Booker in a scene from 'The Horse Whisperer'

Whisper softly, but Redford may prove a barnstormer

THE EDINBURGH Film Festival scored a double coup last night with the UK premiere of *The Horse Whisperer* and the world premiere of Linda McCartney's 12-minute animation, *Wide Prairie*.

Dedicating the evening to the late Linda McCartney, Festival director Lizzie Francke described her film as a "very sweet and chirpy little animation".

Produced by both Linda and Sir Paul, Linda wrote the music and lyrics for the story of a woman who leaves behind the world of mobile phones to escape to the open country.

But the main event was the premiere of *The Horse Whisperer*, Robert Redford's film of the debut novel of the British author Nicholas Evans. Redford made Evans a millionaire overnight, buying the rights to the book before he had even read it.

Last night's premiere had an inauspicious prologue. Ms

FIRST NIGHT

THE HORSE
WHISPERER AND
WIDE PRAIRIE
EDINBURGH FILM
FESTIVAL

Francke had sent Redford an invitation and, because he is a fanatical fisherman, three fly fishing hooks to "reel him in". The letter was mislaid and Redford received only the hooks, chucking them away in puzzlement. He told Ms Francke when they did eventually meet recently that he would have loved to have come to Edinburgh, birthplace of his grandfather.

Redford both directs and stars in the movie as the man with power over horses and over a married, hardbitten New York magazine editor played by Kristin Scott Thomas.

It is a sweeping and often

moving pastoral epic set among the hills of Montana, but the changes to the international bestselling novel are at times thoughtless, at times utterly bizarre.

In the book the magazine editor, hearing her daughter has been in an accident and has to have a leg removed, asks: "How high above the knee?" It is a point of detail that betrays an inability to express emotion. In the film she asks: "Which leg?" which seems a not-unreasonable question.

Much more importantly, Redford has completely changed the ending. In the book he cannot live with the affair and commits a spectacularly dramatic suicide. In the film he lives and she goes happily back to her husband.

Is the dramatic denouement of the book discarded just so the last shot can be one of Redford gazing moodily over the landscape? As we are dealing here with a man who believes

he can play a romantic lead at the age of 60 and that no one will blink (but we do!) it has to be a possibility.

But there are compensations. Scott Thomas gives an Oscar-worthy performance as a woman gradually discovering reservoirs of emotion. She can convey pain and desire without need for words.

And one particular scene might yet find a mention in movie history. Redford has been criticised for cutting out the sexual relationship in the book and instead expressing the couple's passion in a long, lingering encounter at a barn dance. But it works.

He and Scott Thomas dance at first apart, then more closely, holding each other's hands, clasping each other's backs in a way that will not alarm the assembled friends yet gives intense expression to repressed desire. The film could start a new fashion for hoedowns.

DAVID LISTER

Industry in £12m pro-car offensive

THE MOTOR industry is planning a £12m public relations campaign against the transport policies of the Government, which it believes is "no friend of the car", it was revealed yesterday.

The five-year strategy, which will target schoolchildren as well as politicians and the media, was disclosed in a confidential internal memo from the industry's umbrella body, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), leaked to the environmental pressure group, Friends of the Earth.

The campaign's aim, the document reveals, will be to reverse the "growing currency" given to the green lobby's policies on reducing car use by "the public and Government".

It will seek to counter the restrictions on car use foreshadowed in the Transport White Paper published last month. Among many other measures, the White Paper envisaged local authority tolls for driving and parking in town centres.

Friends of the Earth said the leak would severely embarrass the motor trade but the SMMT said yesterday that the industry was working closely with the Government and attempts to suggest otherwise were "facile".

However, the document does state bluntly that the Government "is no friend of the car".

The five-page memo envisages using schools programmes - a trial programme next year and an extended programme in 2000 - as well as campaign weeks, conferences, direct mail-shots and eventually a £10m advertising campaign to convince both public and policy makers that the industry is taking its environmental responsibilities seriously. The ultimate objective, the document says, is to protect "the

BY MICHAEL MCCARTHY
Environment Correspondent

long-term commercial freedom of the motor industry and the lifestyle freedom of car users".

In shaping the campaign, the memo says, the industry should move away from stressing the benefits of clean engine technology - "scientific arguments alone proved no defence for Shell in the Brent Spar fiasco", it points out - and use positive arguments such as "cars provide mobility and independence".

Friends of the Earth said it was "hogwash" for the car industry to say it was environmentally responsible.

"This document confirms that the motor industry is not only cynical but immoral," said Tony Juniper, the group's policy and campaigns director. "Why should they have commercial freedom and everyone else be denied the right to breathe clean air? Instead of spending money on trying to manufacture public opinion they should be helping to solve Britain's environmental and transport problems by discouraging excessive car use."

The SMMT said it had nothing to apologise for or be embarrassed about in the memo, which it described as an internal discussion document. "There's nothing new about the motor industry selling its story," said Al Clarke, the society's spokesman. "We have been conducting a PR campaign since 1902."

"It shows that as a responsible industry we are trying to contact and inform people about the real benefits that modern technology is delivering. We are delighted to be working with the Government and their goal of reducing the environmental impact of motor vehicles."

Maternity leave worst in Europe

THE UNITED Kingdom is bottom of the European league for giving maternity pay and paid parental leave, according to research published yesterday.

Firms in 15 other countries including Ireland, France, Belgium, Germany and Sweden are more generous than British companies in the amount of paid leave they give parents, the study by the GMB general workers' union found.

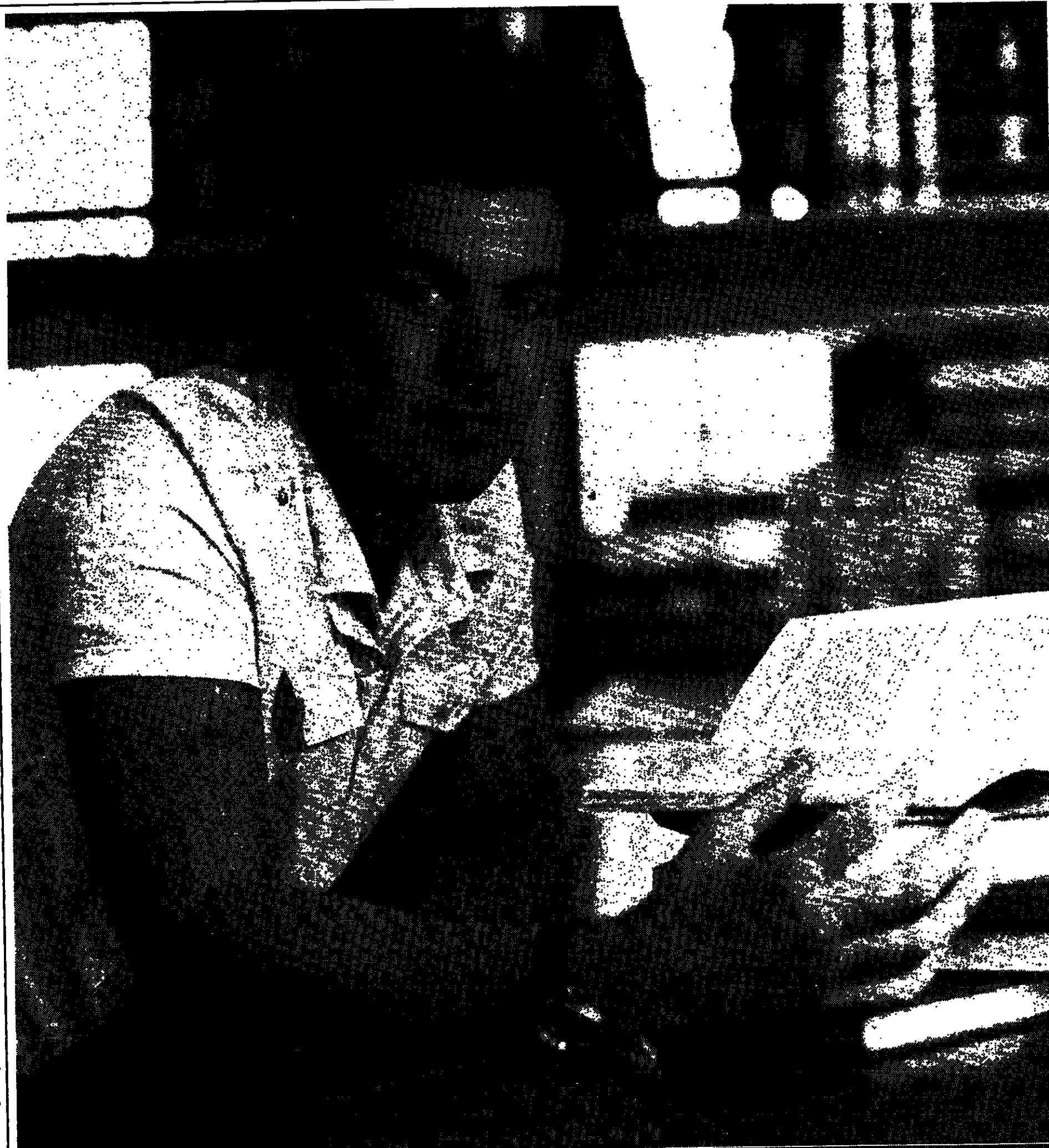
The union's national officer, Donna Covey, said: "The UK is bottom of the heap in providing an archaic and unproductive system which penalises those who seek to have children." She said other countries found the resources to give "reasonable" paid leave to pregnant women and to parents, adding: "It is sure-

BY ALAN JONES

ly not beyond the resources of our Government to do likewise."

Under new legislation to ensure fairness at work, statutory maternity leave will be extended and workers entitled to unpaid parental leave.

The GMB is campaigning for further improvements, including the right to paid parental leave. It calculated that in the UK, women in private firms with at least two years' service receive the equivalent of 8.6 weeks' full pay on maternity leave. That compares with 16 weeks in Holland, Greece and Spain; 29 weeks in Finland; 31 weeks in Germany; 42 weeks in Sweden and Norway; and 47.7 weeks in Austria.



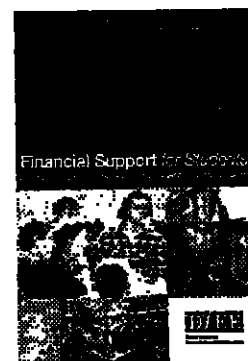
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FBI searches hotel in hunt for bombers

AMERICAN AND Kenyan detectives hunting the Nairobi embassy bombers have raided a hotel in the city and the manager was reported to have been arrested.

The US Federal Bureau of Investigation and Kenya's Criminal Investigations Department confirmed yesterday that they had raided the hotel on Tuesday. "The FBI and CID confirm that searches were conducted at Hilltop Hotel in Nairobi on Tuesday August 18," the two organisations said in a joint statement.

"The investigation is proceeding in a logical manner, and no further comment will be made at this time."

The statement confirmed a report in the *Daily Nation* and comments by hotel staff that FBI and CID agents had searched the Hilltop. The newspaper, citing unnamed sources, said two hotel rooms were used to assemble the bomb, which killed 247 people and wounded more than 5,000 others. The statement made no mention of reports that the hotel's manager had been arrested.

A member of the hotel staff said FBI agents had come to

By ED STODDARD

the hotel on Tuesday and arrested its manager. The *Daily Nation* also said the manager had been arrested.

The newspaper said 15 FBI agents and six CID detectives had sealed off the hotel and spent two-and-a-half hours searching all the rooms. It published a photograph of an agent carrying a box, which it said was believed to contain "vital evidence".

"Two rooms were inspected for forensic evidence but it appeared that the bombers had swept clean any particles of the material used to make the bomb," the paper quoted a source as saying.

One member of staff said employees were locked out during the search. "They brought out several boxes and after we started work they came back to pick up another cardboard box which they left behind," he said.

The co-manager of the hotel, Khalid Saleh, said it was not possible that the bomb could have been constructed in a room, as cleaners entered occupied rooms every day. "That

(making the bomb) is something which is not really possible," he said. "They must have assembled in someplace else. We'd have noticed."

The *Daily Nation* said that Mohammed Saddiq Odeh, deported to Kenya from Pakistan in connection with the bombing on 7 August, had confessed to masterminding the attack.

The paper said Odeh, a Palestinian, had booked into the hotel on 4 August, to join three accomplices who had checked in the day before.

It said that on the day of the attack they completed the bomb in an enclosed pick-up truck, which they then drove across the city to the embassy.

The *Washington Post* reported yesterday that Odeh had given details to Pakistani officials of a global paramilitary network aimed at US interests abroad and orchestrated by the wealthy Saudi dissident Osama bin Laden.

The *New York Times* quoted unnamed Pakistani officials in Islamabad as saying two more suspects in the Nairobi bombing had been arrested while trying to cross into neighbouring Afghanistan.



Sisters Temina, left, and Lori Daliza, visit Nairobi's US Embassy for the first time yesterday since their mother, Jean, was killed. AP

Aid staff pull out of Afghanistan

BY JASON BURKE
in Kandahar

AID ORGANISATIONS began evacuating their workers from Afghanistan yesterday after a warning by the United Nations of a "serious threat to non-Muslims" in the country. Workers from international aid organisations, including Médecins Sans Frontières, flew out of Kandahar yesterday and a number of other expatriate staff were planning to leave today. The UN has told its staff to stay in the organisation's major sites in Afghanistan and limit their movement as much as possible if they cannot leave the country. The British High Commission yesterday warned all British nationals to leave as soon as possible.

There have been reports that Islamic fundamentalists associated with the double bombings in East Africa earlier this month have fled to Afghanistan. The country is already home to Osama bin Laden, the Saudi millionaire who has vowed to attack Amer-

ican interests around the world as part of his campaign to drive the US out of Saudi Arabia. Earlier this week the Americans evacuated non-essential diplomatic staff from neighbouring Pakistan for security reasons.

The warning to aid workers comes as relations between the Taliban Islamic militia, who in recent weeks have extended their control to 90 per cent of Afghanistan, and neighbouring states have deteriorated sharply.

Tensions with Iran in particular have risen in the last few days. Iran claims that the Taliban are holding 11 diplomats who were in Mazar-e-Sharif, the key northern town that fell to the Islamic army nearly two weeks ago, in prison in Kandahar. The Taliban say that they are holding 30 Iranians who were captured while supplying weapons to an opposition fac-

tion in the north but deny any knowledge of any diplomats.

Iran, a predominantly Shia Muslim country, has been supporting Shia Muslim fighters in Afghanistan against the largely Sunni Muslim Taliban.

The Taliban minister for Interior Affairs, Mullah Khurullah, in command at Mazar-e-Sharif, said that Iranian Muslim leaders had branded the Taliban "illegal gangsters" and said that the Islamic militia was not afraid of Iran. "Everyone knows about Afghanistan and the Afghans. We taught the British and the Soviets a lesson and if anyone else makes their mistakes there will be the same result," he said.

Shia Muslims in Taliban-held areas of Afghanistan are, according to some reports, already being harassed. There are also reports that Afghans in Iran are being detained in camps and that hundreds of Sunni Muslims are fleeing over the Iranian border.

Five-year famine kills millions in North Korea

THE FACE of 11-year-old Kim Un Bok stares out from the photograph. At just 15 kilograms (2st 5lb) in weight, her stick-like arms lie by her sides, her bony rib-cage pushed up by a bloated stomach. She is suffering from serious diarrhoea, brought on by eating what the North Korean government calls "alternative foods" - anything from pond weed to bark.

"We are estimating that of North Korea's approximately 22-23 million people, 300,000 to 800,000 die annually from the food shortage, peaking in 1997," said Mark Kirk yesterday, one of a three-strong team from the US House of Representatives' International Relations Committee (HIRC), which has just spent a week in North Korea. "We found that the hospitals were really hospices. There is little to nothing in North Korea's entire healthcare system. The hospitals have no food, no x-ray film, no aspirin," he said.

North Korea is now well into its fourth year of severe food shortages and video footage and photographs brought back by the HIRC team showed some of the most graphic images yet of the effects of long-term malnutrition, especially in remote areas. In the orphanages, newborn babies were senseless from lack of food; in a schoolroom, 16-year-olds were so stunted that they looked five years younger. Unlike aid workers who must take care not to jeopardise humanitarian work by offending the Stalinist North Korean government, the HIRC was more candid in some of its assessments. International food aid had saved lives, and now feeds almost all children under the age of seven, but monitoring was still "flawed", its report said, because the World Food Programme was not allowed to make unscheduled, unannounced visits. The Médecins Sans Frontières charity is pulling out of North Korea next month after a rift with the government over restrictions.

BY TERESA POOLE
in Peking

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Swiss ask Pakistan to charge Bhutto

BY PETER CAPELLA
in Geneva

ALLEGATIONS OF corruption against the Pakistani opposition leader, Benazir Bhutto, were given new weight yesterday after a Swiss magistrate formally asked Pakistan to press charges against Ms Bhutto for money-laundering.

The request by the investigating magistrate in Geneva, Daniel Devaud, is linked to alleged kickbacks from contracts with Swiss financial inspection firms concluded while Ms Bhutto was prime minister in 1991. Mr Devaud said Ms Bhutto used a Geneva-based bank account to buy jewellery worth £117,000 in London last August, and there is sufficient evidence of money-laundering. A £92,000 diamond necklace bought at the time was confiscated from a safe deposit box in Switzerland. Last October, the Swiss authorities forced seven banks in Geneva, including a subsidiary of Barclays Bank, to freeze £2.6m belonging to Ms Bhutto and her husband, Asif Ali Zardari, after a request from Pakistan.

Ms Bhutto has denied the accusations, saying they are part of a political plot against her family orchestrated by the prime minister of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif. Her supporters claim that the Swiss are being fed false documents.

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Lewinsky affair: Intern due for second appearance before Starr as President begins family holiday

Clinton loses his support in Congress

AS MONICA LEWINSKY prepared for her second grand jury appearance today, the political establishment steered an ever-wider berth around President Clinton, with long-time political allies conspicuously withholding their support.

Opinion polls taken after Mr Clinton's admission of his "inappropriate" relationship with Ms Lewinsky showed his popular support holding up, but the signs were that, for the first time in his career, the political might trump the popular.

Democrats in California were among the most outspoken, with Senator Dianne Feinstein - mooted as a possible vice-presidential candidate in the year 2000 and a noted Clinton ally - saying: "My faith in the President's credibility has been shattered."

California is expected to see some of the toughest races for the Democrats in this autumn's mid-term congressional elections. One three-term Democratic member of the House of Representatives even went so far as to add his voice to growing Republican calls for Mr Clinton's resignation.

Paul McClellan, of Pennsylvania, who is not seeking re-election this autumn, said: "The consequences when any public official lies under oath should be the forfeiture of office. Regrettably, I've come to the conclusion that the President lied under oath. I would not have accepted that from Richard Nixon. Unfortunately, I can't accept it from Bill Clinton."

While no other Democrat went so far, the word from the

BY MARY DEJEVSKY
in Washington

White House was that attempts to drum up public support from Democratic Congressmen had failed. On Capitol Hill, the watchword was caution, with a majority wanting to wait to see what evidence had been collected by the independent prosecutor, Kenneth Starr, before committing themselves. Mr Starr's report, which could presage impeachment proceedings in Congress, is expected in mid-September.

Monica Lewinsky's summons to appear before the grand jury today for the second time was hailed as a further sign that the investigation is nearing its end. She is expected to face questions related to Mr Clinton's testimony on Monday.

Further reports of that occasion seeped out yesterday, adding to the picture of acrimony and defiance on Mr Clinton's part. The President was said to have interrupted proceedings for a full hour of consultation with his lawyers after refusing to go into precise details of his sexual contact with Ms Lewinsky. His lawyers reportedly broke off the encounter before prosecutors were ready, leaving open the possibility that Mr Clinton could be recalled, this time under subpoena.

Editorial comment in leading newspapers - the first day of considered comment in most of the East Coast press - was highly unsympathetic, even in notably liberal papers such as *The New York Times* and *Washington Post*. *The Wall Street*

Journal, which has taken a tough, anti-Clinton line ever since allegations about his relationship with Ms Lewinsky first broke in January, printed a battery of comment. This was led by a column headed: "Why he must go" from the conservative commentator, William Bennett, who described Mr Clinton's television address as "the most deceptive, shameless and self-pitying speech ever delivered by an American President".

In a sign of the ripple effect that Mr Clinton's admission is likely to have, Paula Jones - the woman who tried unsuccessfully to sue Mr Clinton for sexual harassment - issued a statement disputing the President's claim that his evidence in her case was "legally correct". "There is good reason to believe that he did try to get other people not to tell the truth. Obstructing justice is wrong, no matter how cleverly done."

The Clinton family meanwhile was marking Mr Clinton's 52nd birthday in seclusion in Martha's Vineyard. Mrs Clinton, who issued a statement on Tuesday saying that she was "committed" to her marriage and felt "uncomfortable" about the spotlight on the family's private life, was said to have given her husband a birthday present. The White House spokesman, Mike McCurry, had noted as they departed for their two-week holiday, however, that they had "a lot of healing to do".

David Aaronovitch, *Review*, page 3
Letters, *Review*, page 2



Bill Clinton in 'that tie', with Ronald Reagan's former press secretary Jim Brady, at a White House event

TO "THAT DRESS" must be added "that tie". According to reports in Washington, on the day Monica Lewinsky testified to the grand jury for the first time, Bill Clinton expressed solidarity by wearing a tie she had given him.

The day was 6 August, the place the White House Rose Garden, the occasion a presi-

PRESIDENT'S TIE TRICK

dential speech on gun control. And the tie? It was a jazzy gold and dark-blue diamond-patterned number. It was unusual for Mr Clinton to wear so vivid a tie for so sombre an occasion. A *New York Times* reporter said it sent "a jolt" through certain lawyers.

illegal signal to Ms Lewinsky before her testimony. To Ms Lewinsky's lawyers it meant the "affair" might still not be over. The message, if there was one, was lost on Ms Lewinsky: she would have seen "her" tie only after she returned from the courthouse that evening, when her testimony against Mr Clinton was complete.

Wounded President can still strike abroad

IN THE dying days of his presidency, Jimmy Carter launched a daring raid to try to rescue the hostages in the American Embassy in Tehran.

It was a dramatic lesson in American politics: just because a president is on his last legs, does not mean that he will not deliver surprises in the field of foreign affairs and military adventurism. It was also, of course, a lesson in practicality: the mission failed flamboyantly, leaving American corpses and hardware scattered across the desert.

BY ANDREW MARSHALL
in Washington

As President Bill Clinton confronts his damaged presidency, the world will wonder what it can expect of a man who is clearly badly weakened, whose party is the minority in both Houses of Congress and who cannot run again for president. Traditionally, presidents quickly discover that though their domestic policymaking is strictly limited by the constitution, they have more latitude in foreign policy. As they approach

the end of their term in office, that becomes even more pressing and they start to consider their "place in history". But at times like these, even that latitude becomes limited - and sometimes in damaging and dangerous ways.

The pillars of the President's power in foreign policy are threefold: political, diplomatic and military. Politically, the President is already weak and is now more so. He cannot realistically expect to get many of his top priorities through Congress.

Diplomatically, America remains America. It continues to wield enormous power in every key arena of decision-making. But at the margins, it will be that much more difficult to get allies to play along when the President is so obviously weakened, and enemies will be that much more willing to confront the US.

It is probably no coincidence that both Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia and Iraq's Saddam Hussein are thumbing their noses at the US. Nor will the White House have much hope of de-

playing pressure on Israel to end the stalemate in the Middle East and revive hopes of peace. Why should Benjamin Netanyahu listen to Bill Clinton now?

The most important point is that America's promises have much less weight when the White House is weakened. It cannot, in many cases, deliver. Aid packages, treaties and trade deals all go through Congress. Allies and opponents alike will prefer to wait out the next two years rather than strike major deals now.

But militarily, the White House is still in charge. Though the President has always had a difficult relationship with the military because of his decision not to fight during the Vietnam War, the military bureaucracy will continue to function despite the lack of legislative coordination.

The President, in short, can promise little in his remaining two years; but he can threaten. That creates a dangerous asymmetry between carrots and sticks in US foreign policy. As the Carter case shows, presidents sometimes become more bellicose in their final months, both because they want to demonstrate to the world that they are no pushover and because it seems the easiest way out of difficult situations.

President Clinton has used military force only haltingly during his years in office. He stood back from confrontation with Saddam Hussein earlier this year, for instance, during the last clash over weapons inspections. That may not be the case in future.

Angola, Zimbabwe pledge guns to Kabila

THE RWANDAN-backed rebellion in the Democratic Republic of Congo threatened to spiral to a regional disaster yesterday when Zimbabwe and Angola pledged to send in guns and soldiers to save President Laurent Kabila's beleaguered regime.

As rebel forces continued to pose on the Congo capital, Kinshasa, Zimbabwe's President, Robert Mugabe, claimed that the 14-nation Southern African Community (SADC), chaired by the South African President, Nelson Mandela, had "unanimously" agreed to send in troops. SADC considered the rebellion an invasion of Congo by Uganda and Rwanda, he said.

But the announcement exposed divisions within SADC. Some member countries - including the regional superpower, South Africa - were clearly horrified yesterday by President Mugabe's undertaking. Yesterday President Mandela, emphasising that he was speaking as SADC chair, said the situation would be exacerbated by sending in foreign troops.

BY MARY BRAID
in Johannesburg

Although Mr Mugabe, one of Mr Kabila's few close allies, chairs SADC's defence committee, the body's status is under internal review. The meeting at which he claims the decision to back Mr Kabila was taken was attended by only nine member states.

Richard Cornwall of the South African Institute for Security Studies said the SADC split was an ominous sign that the conflict could spread beyond Congo's borders. But he said Mr Mugabe, still bitter about having to hand over the SADC chairmanship to President Mandela, had been engineering an alliance with the governments of Angola, Namibia and Zambia for weeks in support of military intervention. That alliance considers South Africa too close to Uganda and Rwanda.

For Mr Cornwall it marks a parting of the ways for the region's "political dinosaurs", led by the autocratic Mr Mugabe (who faces an uprising in his

own country) from Africa's more enlightened democratic leaders. Thabo Mbeki, South Africa's president-in-waiting, is an unofficial spokesman for the latter group.

In the past month, Mr Mbeki has had reason to blush at his prophecy of a political and social renaissance in Africa. In the past two weeks he has rallied against political corruption and dictatorial leaders who steal from their people to line their own pockets. Mr Mugabe and a few other presidents appear to have taken this personally.

South Africa's relations with Mr Kabila's government have never been warm. Last year, when South Africa tried to broker a political settlement between Mr Kabila - then himself the frontman for a Rwandan-backed rebellion - and Mobutu Sese Sese, former president of Zaire, as Congo was known formerly, Mr Kabila failed to show up for a meeting on board a South African naval ship.

While Mr Mandela endured a humiliating day-long wait, South African government insiders made clear that Mr Mandela thought Mr Kabila "an arrogant son of a bitch".

Mr Kabila went on to alienate Rwanda and Uganda, who put him in power, primarily to secure their own borders. He not only failed to provide security but courted the enemies of his sponsors.

The current crisis owes everything to the Rwandan Tutsi obsession with survival following the 1994 genocide of 800,000 Tutsis by Rwanda's majority Hutus. The Hutus con-



A soldier directs comrades who refused to join the rebellion against President Laurent Kabila

Reuters

tinued to find refuge in Congo. The Tutsi army is far superior to anything that Congo and her emerging major allies can muster. "The Rwandans would make mincemeat of them all," said one political analyst yesterday.

There is considerable admiration - notably within the US government - for Rwanda, regarded as the Israel of Africa. Despite the military might of the minority Tutsi government, however, sheer weight of Hutu numbers make its long term prospects bleak.

In the regional crisis, pre-

cipitated by the Congo rebellion, alliances are switching at breakneck speed, based on shifting self interest. Morally the situation is a mire. All alliances are unholy. Sworn enemies at the time of Mobutu's overthrowing have become the most convenient of friends.

Senior members of the Mobutu regime, who grew fat and rich during his 30-year corrupt rule, have been sighted in Rwanda. Just over a year after Rwanda chased them from power, the Mobutists are suspected of bankrolling the rebel army.

In another twist, the rebellion in Congo has breathed new life into a spent political force. Jonas Savimbi, leader of Angola's rebel Unita forces, was written off after Mobutu's departure cut off the supply routes for Unita arms. It is reported that Unita soldiers are now allies of the Rwandan rebels - a development that could hasten an almost certain return to war in Angola. Yesterday, Angola said it was part of a "collective decision" to send Mr Kabila military help.

Without outside intervention Mr Kabila may be banished

from Kinshasa by the weekend. It is likely that he will set up a base in his tribal stronghold of Lubumbashi in the south where he may perhaps push for the secession of the Katanga region from the vast, unstable Congo.

Rwandan Tutsis can hardly expect to rule from Kinshasa, where hate radio has been inciting violence against them for the past week. Whether the Congolese opposition figures, which now front the offensive against Mr Kabila, will be seen as credible in Kinshasa remains to be seen.

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'Any chance of demolishing our minaret?'

FRONT LINE
BRADCHIT, SOUTHERN LEBANON

A FEW days ago, a village delegation turned up to see Captain Sean Whelan, commanding the Irish United Nations troops on the edge of Bradchit. Would the Irish be kind enough to demolish the minaret of the local mosque, they wanted to know? The Israeli tank up on the hill behind the village had put 10 shells into the minaret in as many years and it was now in danger of crashing onto worshippers.

But Captain Whelan is as canny a man as ever patrolled a Shia Muslim village and shrewdly realised - once an Irish engineer had shinned up the building and pronounced it too dangerous to dismantle - that the UN might be charged for damage caused by the minaret's removal. Besides, the Irish had no wish for the word to go round that they were in the business of demolishing mosques - hitherto a Serb prerogative.

Since the Israelis had fired so many shells into Bradchit's minaret, they could probably have been asked to complete the job. Cracked and blasted, it stands evanescent, steel tendons and wires dangling over the little village square, in full view of the Israeli Merkava tank which has tried so hard to destroy it. Abdul Hussein Shihab has good reason to know the tank's location. Not only did the Israeli gunners on the hilltop artillery compound above him kill his next-door neighbour, 80-year-old Zanzam Farhat, in 1994, but the land on which the tank is now positioned happens to belong to Mr Shihab himself.

"I have six parcels of land and only one is outside the Israeli occupied area," he says, a 67-year-old tobacco farmer with no more tobacco to farm. "When I went to visit one of my bits of land between the village and the tank last month, they fired at me. Imagine, a farmer shot at for walking on his own land! But it is my land. I can't leave it because I was born



here, like all my grandfathers, and stayed through all the war. Property is a birthright."

A very damaged birthright, one might have added. Half the houses in Bradchit look as if a monster has nibbled away at their walls. Mr Shihab's daughter Khadija shows me a shell-hole converted into a window.

Bradchit's fate is to be on the very edge of Israel's occupation zone in southern Lebanon. Its villagers include some of Lebanon's most efficient guerrillas - two of the three mayors elected this year are Hizbollah officials - who have twice stormed their way up the hill above Mr Shihab's home and captured the Israeli compound (once filming the operation as the Israelis ran away). Israeli retaliation has been ferocious. At least 60 men and women have been killed around Bradchit, one of them an Irish UN soldier who died in the room above Mr Shihab's house in 1980, torn to pieces by an Israeli flechette round as he slept in his bunk.

Bradchit is a scruffy village of fly-blown wall posters (most of them Hizbollah) and lines of tobacco leaves hung out to brown in the unrelenting sun. Perhaps 100 of its 1,800 inhabitants are Catholics, the remainder Shias. They attend each other's funerals and weddings and feast days but do not intermarry. "I had an aunt who married a Muslim," Angele Bassilieh tells me as she pushes bright green tobacco leaves onto a steel rod to dry.



Pte Tom Duffy, of Galway, patrolling past the dangerous minaret Robert Fisk

a kind of giant tobacco kebab. "It was a love match." And were their children Muslim or Christian, I ask cruelly. "Communist," she replies, and bursts into laughter.

Mr Shihab and his family say Bradchit got its name from a local prophet, Nahi Chit, who came down from the Bekaa to graze his sheep here in the Middle Ages. Angele Bassilieh and her family - who claim their Italian ancestor arrived here from Jerusalem before the Crusades - say the village was founded by the third son of Adam who also, yes, came to graze his sheep here. Angele and her three sisters are in mourning for their cousin who has just died of cancer at the age of 35; all the Muslims have come to her home to pay their condolences.

They share life and death in Bradchit. The local Muslim graveyard lists those who were killed in the war as "martyrs" - Hizbollah dead carry a yellow flag on the grave - while the Bassiliehs have lost another cousin to the war. "Our home is something special to us," Angele's father, Nasrallah, says. Despectated and unshaven, he grows corn and keeps a few cows. Of the sisters, only Angele works; she is a French teacher in the local school.

Just up the road, I meet the two Hizbollah mayors. Ali Shehah and Ali Abdul Naki, tall, neatly bearded men in their thirties. The government has forgotten Bradchit, they claim. It was the Hizbollah who built the clinic in which we are sitting and installed an electrical grid in several of the streets and repaired many of the houses (after, it should be added, the

Israelis were provoked into their revenge attacks by Hizbollah assaults on the tank compound). "It is a special village," Ali Shehah adds. "It is so beautiful in spring with its olive trees and springs."

But every village has its secrets. Three of its young men joined Israel's proxy South Lebanon Army militia, the very gunmen who sometimes fire into Bradchit with the Israelis. "One of them was called Hussein Abdul Naki and he was a big criminal," Ali Shehah says. "The second was called Ahmed Salami. We killed both of them. There is a third. I used to play in the streets of this village with him as a boy. Now he lives in Bint Jbeil with his wife, in the occupied zone. Soon, he, too, is going to be killed."

ROBERT FISK

South Korea car strikers amass arms

WORKERS AND management at Hyundai Motors were engaged in a final effort last night to avert a violent confrontation at South Korea's biggest car factory after strikers and police amassed arsenals of weapons.

Negotiators from the ruling party spent all day talking to leaders of the Hyundai union, which seized control of the plant last month after the company announced 1,600 compulsory redundancies. Since the beginning of the week the factory in the south-eastern city of Ulsan, has resembled a town under siege, with 5,000 strikers camping in its grounds and twice as many riot police massed outside.

The government and the company insist the strike is illegal, and warrants have been issued for the arrest of 68 union leaders. The police are not expected to raid the plant while the talks are continuing, but last night the negotiators said time was running out. "We have requested the government to refrain from sending in the police while we are holding talks but this is for them to decide and we are not in a position to dictate this," the leader of the ruling-party delegation, No

BY RICHARD LLOYD PARRY in Ulsan

Moo Hyun, said. "If this round of arbitration fails we have no hope of further mediation."

The potentially deadly consequences of a confrontation were obvious yesterday. The strikers have complete control of the plant and have assembled a range of crude weapons and barricades. An array of scrap metal and 50 new Hyundai cars block the main gate, some of them loaded with tanks of oxygen. A large tank of petrol stands among them, and the strikers threaten to ignite the whole barricade if police force their way in.

The strikers are sleeping in factory buildings and in tents made of girders and plastic sheeting. Trays of stones and large bolts have been placed outside many of the tents, for hurling at police or to be propelled from tubes attached to gas canisters. The male strikers are organised into small militias armed with hollow metal pipes.

"At first we didn't bother with the rocks, but the police scared us when they suddenly started to rehearse their raid

early yesterday morning," said a striker named Song. "It may look like an uneven fight but even a worm will turn when it is trodden upon. I am prepared to fight until my last breath."

South Korean papers say 15,000 police are on stand-by to raid the plant, ranging from nervous conscripts to the notorious "white-skull force", elite riot police who bear the skull and crossbones on their helmets.

The police have been displaying their own hardware - a giant bulldozer and an armoured car supporting a tear-gas cannon.

Both sides engaged in psychological warfare yesterday: the strikers vowing at noisy rallies to remain defiant, and the police marching up in formation to the entrance of the plant, only to march away again a few hours later.

The potential for tragedy is further increased by the presence of several hundred children and wives who are camping out alongside their husbands.

Many of the women in the plant say they intend to be at the front of any resistance force as a further discouragement to a violent frontal assault.

Sybil 'all in doctor's head'

SYBIL WAS the most famous case of multiple personality on record, the subject of a book and a film that made the idea one of the hottest concepts in psychology in the 1970s. But, according to research released at the weekend, Sybil was just Sybil.

Dr Cornelius Wilbur, Sybil's psychiatrist, may have suggested the other personalities as an explanation for the woman's problems, Robert Rieber of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York told the American Psychological Association.

BY ANDREW MARSHALL in Washington

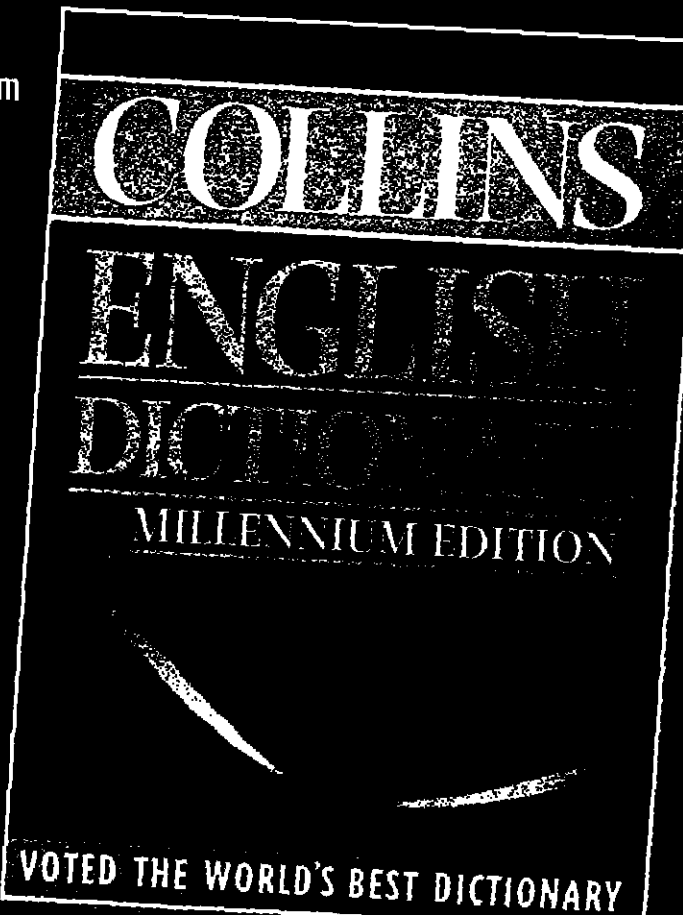
Dr Wilbur's head, not Sybil's. Dr Wilbur tells Ms Schreiber: "I said, 'Well, there's a personality who calls herself Peggy.' And I said, 'She is pretty assertive... she can do things you can't,' and (Sybil) was very, uh, obviously perturbed by this." According to Dr Rieber, Dr Wilbur used different names to describe aspects of Sybil's character.

Sybil wrote a letter to D Wilbur in which she disclaimed having multiple personalities but Dr Wilbur ignored it. D Rieber said.

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BUSINESS

BRIEFING

Two Allied Carpets directors quit

TWO DIRECTORS of Allied Carpets have resigned following the accounting errors that led to the suspension of the company's shares last month. David Pout (below), the finance director, and Steve Barber, retail director, are both leaving with immediate effect. The company would not comment on the level of compensation, although Mr Pout was on a one-year contract and was paid £135,000 last year. The two directors appear to have taken responsibility for the accounting problem under which some stores had been booking carpet sales on order rather than when they had been fitted, affecting full year profits by £3m.



Bruce Wright, currently interim finance director at B&Q, will join Allied Carpets in a similar capacity. The company is expected to give more details with its annual results on 26 August.

Cliffe resigns in HSBC shake-up

THE CONSTRUCTION of a new economics department within HSBC Securities produced another change at the top yesterday. Senior economist Mark Cliffe was reported to have resigned. He is the latest casualty caused by the merging of two economics departments formerly at HSBC Capital Markets and HSBC James Capel. Last month the group chief economist, Roger Boodle, announced he would be leaving shortly to set up his own consultancy. Keith Skeoch, former chief economist at James Capel, has already moved to be head of international sales at HSBC Securities.

Bradford & Bingley boosts share

BRADFORD & BINGLEY, Britain's second-largest building society, increased its share of the UK mortgage market in the first half of the year, the lender said yesterday.

Christopher Rodrigues, the chief executive, said the company had increased its mortgage book by £430m to £1.7bn in the first half. "We have a natural market share of around 4 per cent, but in the first six months we have punched above our weight and we are definitely increasing market share," he said.

Bradford & Bingley reported a 41 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £67.3m. Mr Rodrigues said the results reflected the company's commitment to mutualism.

Boots loses £312m on Do It All

BOOTS YESTERDAY revealed that it will book a £312m exceptional loss on the sale of the struggling Do It All DIY business, which it sold yesterday for £68m.

The buyer is Focus Retail Group, an independent DIY retailer backed by Duke Street Capital, a venture capital fund.

Though Boots will remain guarantor on 29 of the stores' leases, the company said there was no danger of the remainder reverting to Boots if the company foundered as Focus has acquired the holding company.

The deal marks the end of a painful period for Boots which

BY NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

formed the Do-It-All group in 1990 following the merger of its Payless DIY chain with WH Smith's Do It All format.

The joint venture never worked and was a regular loss-maker after the housing market collapsed in the early 1990s.

Two years ago WH Smith paid Boots £50m to take its half share of the business away.

"This deal enables us to concentrate our efforts on growing our core businesses. We wish the new owners every success," said Lord Blyth, Boots'

chairman. The deal was welcomed in the City and Boots shares rose 35p to 1005p.

"It means all of the company's non-core activities have now gone. The management can now be more focused and the overall portfolio looks better," one said.

The deal makes Focus Britain's third largest DIY retailer. The company has around 10 per cent of the market after B&Q and Homebase - the two have combined sales of over £600m.

However, its prospects were immediately questioned by industry experts.

Clive Vaughan of Verdict, the retail consultants said: "It seems like a full price and a difficult management task to integrate the two businesses."

However, Focus marketing director Jim Lower said there were very few overlaps between the businesses as Focus is based mainly in the north east while Do It All's main strength is in the south.

Focus, which has 71 stores, plans to re-brand Do It All's 139 outlets as Focus/Do It All and to introduce more of a "lifestyle element" to the shops. It will add its Pet World format which is in 30 of its Focus stores and

is considering adding Craftwork centres which offer products for rag-rolling, stencilling and other modern decorating techniques.

Focus recorded profits of £4m on sales of £148m last year. Duke Street Capital, which controls 60 per cent of the company, is injecting a further £25m into the company to help fund the deal.

Do It All made an operating profit of £2.5m on sales of £37m. The company has struggled with a weak brand name and a poor store portfolio. It has also struggled against more powerful competitors which

had much larger market share.

The sale by Boots, which includes the £312m goodwill write-off, means that it has now sold most of the businesses it acquired as part of the ill-fated Ward White acquisition 10 years ago.

It sold the Fads and Home-style DIY business to Alchemy, the venture capital group last year.

The only remaining Ward White business is Halfords, the car accessories business. However, Boots said yesterday that Halfords was a core business and that there were no plans to sell it.

IMF's \$3.8bn lost defending rouble

THE RUSSIAN central bank chief, Sergei Dubinin, last night admitted that some \$3.8bn of the \$4.8bn (\$5bn) advanced by the International Monetary Fund has been blown since 20 July 20 in a futile attempt to shore up the rouble.

The admission, which underlines the increasing desperation of Russia's financial position, came as the Russians were forced to withdraw plans to restructure 278 billion roubles (\$25bn) of short-term government debt in the face of veiled legal threats from Western investment bankers.

These followed complaints that the proposals accompanying Monday's devaluation were grossly discriminatory to foreigners, who account for around 25 per cent of the existing stock of short-term government debt.

BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

Credit Suisse First Boston, believed to be among the hardest-hit of Western investment banks, said foreign holders would have got only a third of what Russians were entitled to.

Western analysts warned yesterday of a very real threat now of wholesale default.

The focus of the crisis is the GKO, or GKO, rouble government debt market. However, there is concern about a further \$10bn of dollar-denominated debt known as MINFins, which are also held to a large extent by foreign investors, all of which could now be at risk.

There were allegations yesterday that MICEX, the Moscow foreign exchange market, had been taking advantage

of the confusion by refusing to honour margin calls on futures contracts.

Foreign investors - mainly big investment banks and hedge funds - have been big players in the GKO market because of the very high yields which enabled investors to more than double their money in a matter of months. But, as one trader admitted yesterday: "Western investors had factored in the risk of devaluation, but not devaluation and debt restructuring at the same time."

The CSFB warning highlights growing fears that the crisis could snowball, with catastrophic knock-on effects for other emerging markets. Russia's total sovereign debt, according to debt rating agency Fitch IBCA, is \$141bn, up \$11bn from the end of last year.

In the past two weeks spreads on Brazilian Brady bonds have widened some 200 basis points due to Russian fallout," said Kasper Bartholdy at CSFB. "To refinance all its external debt at this extra cost would imply for Brazil alone, an extra \$30n a year."

The Russian authorities together with Deutsche Bank and JP Morgan, the two institutions advising the Russians on the debt restructuring, were last night locked in meetings with the big Western investors.

As part of the latest IMF package agreed in July, Russia was to refinance part of its debt obligations through a \$2bn Eurobond issue this autumn. But even if the present impasse can be resolved, the likelihood of getting such an issue away looks very slim.



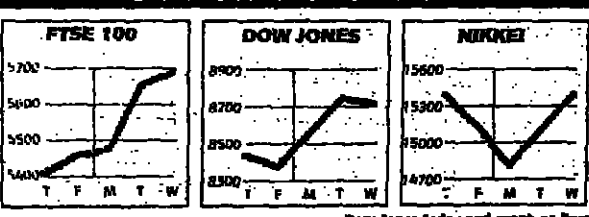
Russians haggle in the street over currency as the growing crisis hits citizens AFP

Japan is dragging its heels on about \$800m worth of loans committed to Russia despite a plea from Moscow to pay up. Commentators were also expressing doubts about the next tranche of IMF money due in

September. Mohamed El-Erian, head of emerging markets at Salomon Smith Barney, said key elements will have to be renegotiated. This requires tough decisions at a time when the impact on ordinary Russians

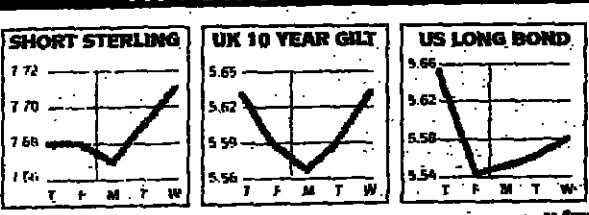
is starting to bite. "The opposition will intensify its attacks on the government now the financial debacle is having an adverse impact on the average Russian," he says. "The position will get worse rather than better."

STOCK MARKETS



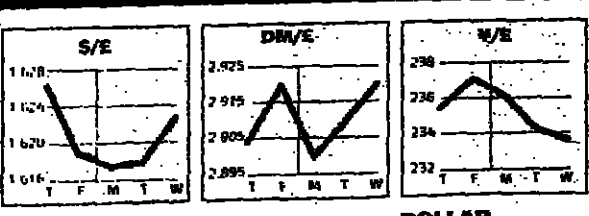
Index	Close	Change	Change (%)	52 wk High	52 wk Low	Vol
FTSE 100	5694.30	46.30	0.82	6183.70	4382.80	3.85
FTSE 250	5168.10	8.90	0.17	5970.90	4428.30	3.89
FTSE 350	2728.10	19.00	0.70	2989.10	2147.80	3.86
FTSE 1000	2446.95	17.85	0.73	2884.32	2106.39	3.85
FTSE Smallcap	2325.90	7.30	0.31	2793.80	2227.60	3.61
FTSE FTSE100	1785.80	6.40	0.36	1917.10	1425.20	4.03
FTSE AIM	996.70	3.20	0.32	1146.90	865.90	1.36
FTSE EBLK 100	1029.98	3.30	0.32			
Dow Jones	8709.24	-7.67	-0.09	9387.84	6971.32	1.70
Nikkei	15406.34	342.55	2.27	19394.14	14488.41	0.99
Hank S&P	7822.58	411.66	5.71	16194.30	6544.79	3.35
Dax	5996.41	27.53	0.46	6217.82	3467.24	2.87

INTEREST RATES



Index	3 month	6 month	1 year	2 year	3 year	5 year	10 year	15 year	20 year
UK	7.75	0.50	7.64	0.14	5.64	-1.37	5.33	-1.62	
US	5.89	-0.03	5.72	-0.25	5.43	-0.78	5.58	-0.93	
Japan	0.65	0.07	0.65	-0.03	1.48	-0.83	2.01	-0.83	
Germany	3.49	0.23	3.73	0.16	4.43	-1.16	5.14	-1.16	

CURRENCIES



POUND				DOLLAR			
	at Spot	Change	Yr Ago		at Spot	Change	Yr Ago
Dollar	1.6225	+0.50c	1.6038	Sterling	0.6163	-0.19p	0.6235
D-Mark	2.9193	+1.10p	2.9548	D-Mark	1.7884	-0.01p	1.8375
Yen	233.65	-40.62	189.79	Yen	143.90	-1.06	118.22
S index	104.00	0.00	102.60	S index	115.10	+0.00	106.10

OTHER INDICATORS

Index	Close	Change	Yr Ago	Index	Close	Change	Yr Ago
Brent Oil (\$)	17.10	0.36	18.77	GDP	115.40	2.40	112.48
Gold (\$)	284.45	-0.40	283.25	RPI	163.00	3.50	157.49
Silver (\$)	5.10	-0.02	4.51	Base Rates	7.50	7.00	

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SOURCE: BLOOMBERG

TOURIST RATES

Country	Rate	Country	Rate
Australia (\$)	2.6151	Mexico (nuevo peso)	13.22
Austria (schilling)	19.84	Netherlands (guilder)	3.1828
Belgium (franc)	58.30	New Zealand (\$)	3.0713
Canada (\$)	2.4047	Norway (krone)	12.16
Cyprus (pound)	0.8272	Portugal (escudo)	286.45
Denmark (krone)	10.82	Saudi Arabia (rial)	5.8841
Euro (mark)	8.6392	Singapore (\$)	2.7112
Finland (mark)	9.4638	Spain (peseta)	238.97
France (franc)	2.8318	South Africa (rand)	9.5629
Germany (mark)	473.37	Sweden (krone)	12.90
Greece (drachma)	1.1234	Switzerland (franc)	2.3755
Hong Kong (\$)	1.1234	Thailand (baht)	61.03
Ireland (pound)	54.44	Turkey (lira)	429340
Israel (shekel)	5.5419	USA (\$)	1.7774
Italy (lira)	2729		
Japan (yen)	228.61		
Malaysia (ringgit)	5.5160		
Malta (lira)	0.6155		

Rates for indication purposes only

SOURCE: Thomas Cook

Cammell buys Wear dock group for £33m

A FORMER chief naval engineer who singlehandedly kept the shipyard of the North-east alive was £30m richer yesterday after agreeing to sell his ship repair and conversion business.

Albert Le Blond, who founded the Wear Dockyard Group in 1974, is selling the company to quoted shipyard group, Cammell Laird Holdings, for £33m.

The takeover brings together some of the most famous names in British shipbuilding. Cammell Laird Holdings owns the eponymous yard on Merseyside after rescuing it from closure under its former owners VSEL.

Mr Le Blond's group includes Hebburn shipyard on the Tyne, bought from the receivers of Swan Hunter in 1994,

BY MICHAEL HARRISON

and the Pallion yard in Sunderland, formerly part of North East Shipbuilders Limited.

Cammell Laird said the merger would be a good geographic fit and would enable the group to reduce purchasing costs and undertake larger refit projects in the offshore market.

The group has not ruled out re-entering the new-build market for specialist ships such as research and seismic vessels.

Mr Le Blond, who began the Wear Dockyard Group with one small derelict dry dock in Sunderland, owns 90 per cent of the business jointly with his wife, Cammell Laird is paying for the business with £20m in cash and issuing a further £13.2m worth

of shares to Mr Le Blond, who will end up with 10 per cent of the enlarged company.

Although he is 63, Mr Le Blond does not intend to give up work. He said the bulk of the proceeds would be reinvested in shares and property while he learns to speak French and catches up on some reading.

The parent company of Wear Dockyard Group, ALB Holdings, had £44m turnover last year and employs 1,000 people at four dry docks in the Tyne Tees and Wear regions.

The acquisition will more than double the size of Cammell Laird, which made pre-tax profits of £42m on sales of £32m last year. It will be partly funded through a one-for-eight rights issue to raise £13.2m.

Rentokil fails to meet profit growth target

SIR CLIVE THOMPSON'S reputation took a knock yesterday when Rentokil, the support services group he runs, failed to meet its 20 per cent profit growth target for the first time in 13 years.

The news is a blow for Sir Clive, whose record for consistently meeting the target had earned him the nickname "Mister Twenty Per Cent" in the City.

In the six months to June, Rentokil reported earnings per share of 5.65p, up 18.6 per cent on the same period of the previous year. It is the first time since 1984 that the company has failed to meet the 20 per cent benchmark at either the interim or the full-year stage.

Sir Clive pointed out that, excluding the effects of the strong

BY PETER THAL LARSEN

pound, earnings per share would have been up 25.5 per cent, ahead of target.

"We aim to achieve 20 per cent growth bar nothing and we've failed," he said. Investors reacted by pushing Rentokil shares down 15p to 365p.

The shortfall was largely the result of the economic turmoil in Asia, where devaluation of several currencies contributed to a 20 per cent drop in profits from the region. In North America, profits were flat after Rentokil sold two businesses and made a decision to pull out of low-margin contracts.

Sir Clive said he would continue to impose the 20 per cent target.

"I think I would probably sleep a lot easier without it. But then it's probably a good thing for shareholders that I lose some sleep," he said.

He added that Rentokil continued to look at potential acquisitions even though it did not need them to continue growth. Sir Clive, who took over as President of the Confederation of British Industry last month, said the effects of the minimum wage and the European Working Time Directive, which limits the number of hours employees can work, would increase costs by about £10m. "We will pass some of this on to our customers and... and a certain amount we will have to absorb," he said.

Investment column, page 17

AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

LONDON

BLUE CHIPS scored their fourth consecutive day of gains. Although Tuesday's excitement faded, Footsie still achieved a 46.1-point advance to 5,694.3. The improved interest-rate outlook and Asian stability helped, but supporting shares made little headway. Vodafone, meeting analysts, rose 43.5p to 880p. BA, on hopes of a deal on airport slots, climbed 32p to 520p. Takeover talk lifted drugs group Zeneca 70p to 2,410p. Roche is the rumoured predator. Derek Pain, page 17

NEW YORK

STOCKS fell as declines in companies exposed to Asia balanced gains for computer firms triggered by strong earnings from Dell. Programme selling helped pull stocks from early gains, indicating that some short-term traders expect the rally of the past two days to stall. The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 14.16 points, or 0.2 per cent, to 8,700.49 by midday, erasing a 41-point gain. Stocks had risen as investors took the view they had been oversold.

TOKYO

THE NIKKEI closed 2.27 per cent up as a rally in US stocks eased fears of a world-wide sell-off. The Nikkei ended 342.55 points higher at 15,406.34. Wall Street's rally led to buying of Japanese blue chips whose earnings are affected by the US economy. The dollar hovered near 144 yen in Tokyo trading amid expectations of government intervention. Traders warned that delay in fixing the banking system could push the Nikkei towards its post-bubble low of 14,309 six years ago.

HONG KONG

THE HANG SENG index surged 5.7 per cent, sparking rallies across Asian markets, as the government dipped into its reserves again to buy stocks. The government is thought to have spent more than HK\$5bn (£400m) buying blue chips such as HSBC Holdings. But some fund managers are warning of long-term damage to investor confidence, saying they were reluctant to buy Hong Kong stocks as the government - not investors - was setting prices.

MALAYSIA

THE KUALA LUMPUR exchange's main index rose 8.81 per cent - the highest one-day gain since February - after the government confirmed that it may use the nation's pension fund to intervene to boost share prices. The Employees Provident Fund, already a big player on the Kuala Lumpur bourse, could also itself participate in the programme. Share prices on the Malaysian bourse have fallen by nearly 70 per cent since the start of the Asian economic crisis.

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Lord Blyth sheds albatross at last

IT HAS taken Lord Blyth, chairman of Boots, 10 years to get the Ward White albatross off his back. When that deal was done, the reasoning was that with Boots the Chemists threatening to go ex-growth, the company had to diversify. So for the princely sum of £900m, Lord Blyth acquired the peerless portfolio of Payless DIY (later merged with WH Smith's Do It All), AG Stanley (including Fads and Homestyle) and Halfords. That it was a disaster on a grand scale goes without saying. The housing boom turned into a bust and the brands revealed themselves as some of the weakest in their sectors.

Now Do It All has gone for £68m (minus the small matter of a £312m write off). AG Stanley has already been sold for £1. So only Halfords, which at most would be worth half the balance, remains. Along the way, there's been untold investment in the three brands. Quite a squandering of shareholders' money then. Ironically, while the Ward White businesses were heading south at a rate of knots Boots proved itself more resilient than anyone could have imagined. Far from being eaten away by the supermarkets, it has powered ahead regardless. It has



OUTLOOK

consistently delivered margins of more than 10 per cent and accounts for 85 per cent of group profits.

It has even managed its own diversification - into travel insurance, home shopping and stores in Ireland, Holland and the Far East. Boots Healthcare International, maker of Nurofen, Strepsils and so on, is also prospering. At its most basic this is an argument for sticking to one's knitting, a lesson that WH Smith is now following with the sale of Waterstone's, Our Price and other periphery businesses.

What is not quite clear is how much of the credit should go to Lord Blyth. The plaudits might rather seem to belong to the management

team at Boots the Chemist. In one respect Lord Blyth has achieved his ambition for the company. If memory serves, his aim was to take Boots from the bottom of the second quartile of the Footsie to the top. In that regard he has succeeded. Boots currently lies 27th. How much of a role Lord Blyth played in that ascent is a matter of opinion.

The rip-off of the innocents

IF THE innocent who unwittingly bought 1,000 ICI shares yesterday morning at 719p each - against a trading range throughout the day of 680p to 690p - would like to get in touch, we'd be only too happy to pursue his grievance with the relevant authority. Everyday some poor sod gets ripped off by the eccentricities of the stock exchange's new order-driven trading system, and on some days it's an awful lot of ripping off that gets done.

This particular problem, where the seller lays a trap and a broker comes along and falls into it, is as much the fault of the broker as the

system. The broker has a duty to his client to spot the trap and avoid it. But it is also indicative of a wider malaise - a system that seems not only to be wide open to abuse and manipulation but also generally fails to serve the needs of investors.

The stock exchange's inability to get to grips with these problems is becoming nothing short of a national disgrace. In the early months it was reasonable to blame it all on teething problems, but the time for that has long since past. The recent package of reforms, including setting the trading day back half an hour and the synchronisation of trading hours with those of the US, seems not to have improved things one jot.

Quite apart from the constant appearance of these rogue prices - and their tendency to penalise those least able to look after themselves, small retail investors - there is a much wider problem with SETs. This is that it is not much used by big institutional investors. Only 30 per cent of trade is passing through the new system with the rest conducted either off market completely or through the old quote driven system. Since there is no longer obligation or transparency in the old system, it means that jobbers are making money out of it as

never before. Investors know this, but they still seem to prefer being taken for a ride under the old to the vagaries of the new.

The solution to these problems is still far from clear. Certainly it would not seem practical now to abandon the new system, on which a large sum of money has been invested, and return wholeheartedly to the old. That in any case is not what institutional investors want. It was they who led the fight against powerful vested interest for a modern order driven system.

Lamentably, we seem to have ended up with the worst of both worlds. Just to repeat the statement, solutions are not easy to find. It is, however, the stock exchange's job to ensure an orderly and efficient market place, and if Gavin Casey, the present chief executive, can't find a way through, he should move over and let someone else have a go.

PowerGen still has ambitions

STOCK MARKET attention may be more on National Power right now, but these are also interesting times

for PowerGen. Speculation about a break-up bid for National Power has put its slightly smaller brother in the shade. But Ed Wallis, PowerGen's combative chairman, is back from holiday and itching to get going again.

The great "merger of equals" with Houston Industries of the US has collapsed. Even so, Ed has not altogether given up on his transatlantic ambitions. Meanwhile, there remains the small task of gaining regulatory approval for PowerGen's £1.9bn acquisition of East Midlands Electricity.

The mergers panel met last week to consider the deal and pass its recommendation onto the new Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, Peter Mandelson. PowerGen is confident the decision will go the right way - so much so that it has already paid Dominion Resources its money. Even with a following wind, it is unlikely Mr Mandelson will set out his position before the middle of next month. Then it will depend, critically, on how much generating capacity Ed is prepared to sacrifice in return for being allowed to integrate vertically with a wires and supply business.

If the price demanded by Mr

Mandelson and the regulators is too high, then PowerGen could be in a pickle. Its expansion strategy on both sides of the Atlantic could be in trouble.

One option is for PowerGen to find another merger partner in the US. The drawback is that many of the potential brides it is eyeing up also own UK ReCs. Then again PowerGen could go for the consolation of a straight takeover of a smaller US utility. But that route is fraught with difficulties too, given the inflated prices that prevail in the American energy sector and the regulatory uncertainties which surround it.

There is, of course, one other scenario - which is that PowerGen is the real takeover target and Nat Power is the diversionary tactic. John Devaney, lately of Energy Group and rumoured to be lining up a bid for Nat Power, is known to regard PowerGen as the more vulnerable of the two generators.

He also shares something in common with Ed Wallis - a love of yachts. John's is in the Med, navigating the Corsican coast. Ed's is named Purple Haze, after the late Jimi Hendrix. We should, perhaps, stand by for some hot links come the autumn.

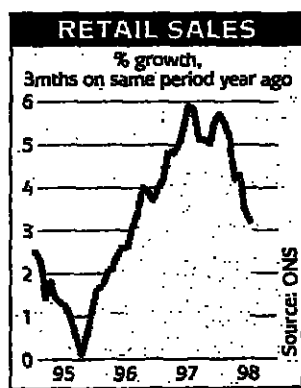
Slowing retail sales add to downturn fears

STEVE LEVINSON

RETAIL SALES growth is continuing to slow despite a bounce back in July after a poor month in June. Government figures out yesterday showed an annual rate of growth of 3.2 per cent in the three months to July, the slowest since August 1996.

Other figures showed a collapse in business investment, down 5.5 per cent in the second quarter and only 1.5 per cent higher than a year earlier.

The data confirm that an economic slowdown is under way. Analysts said the figures were unlikely to alter interest-rate prospects as they did not support the case for either a rise or fall in rates.



The latest high-street figures showed that sales rose by 0.9 per cent in July. A rise was expected after retailers said June had been a poor month due to poor weather and the World

Cup. In June sales fell by 1.5 per cent. The recovery in July was helped by discounting, and sales of clothing and footwear showed the sharpest rise, growing 6 per cent in July after a 9.4 per cent fall in June.

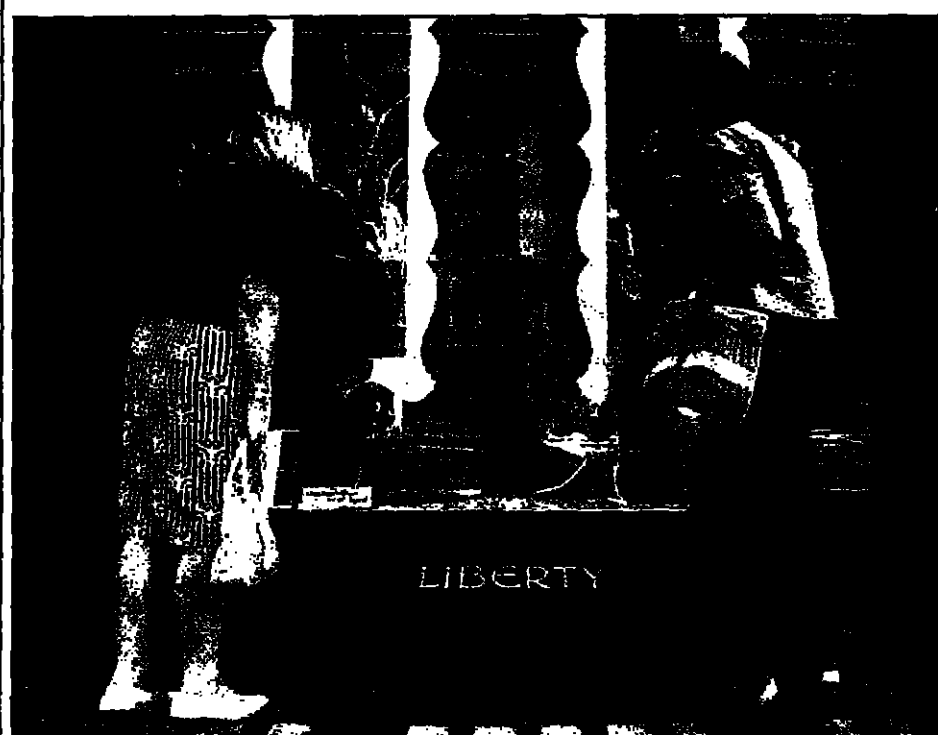
The erratic picture of recent months has not obscured the underlying trend which, says the Office for National Statistics, "still suggests a slowdown".

The best guide is the change in the latest three months compared with the same period a year earlier. This shows retail sales growth falling from 5.9 per cent last summer as consumers spent windfalls from converting building societies, to 3.2 per cent now. The rate has fallen continuously this year.

Geoffrey Dicks, economist at Greenwich NatWest, said little should be read into the July recovery, which was due to aggressive pricing in sales.

The figures on business investment add to the picture of a slowdown. The sharpest falls were in investment by public corporations and utilities. Investment spending is always lumpy and too much should not be read into one quarter's figures. But recent surveys from the CBI and British Chambers of Commerce have warned of a sharp decline in investment intentions. Compared with a year ago, business investment is up by just 1.5 per cent - the slowest growth rate since the fourth quarter of 1995.

Liberty cuts 100 jobs as sales figures fall



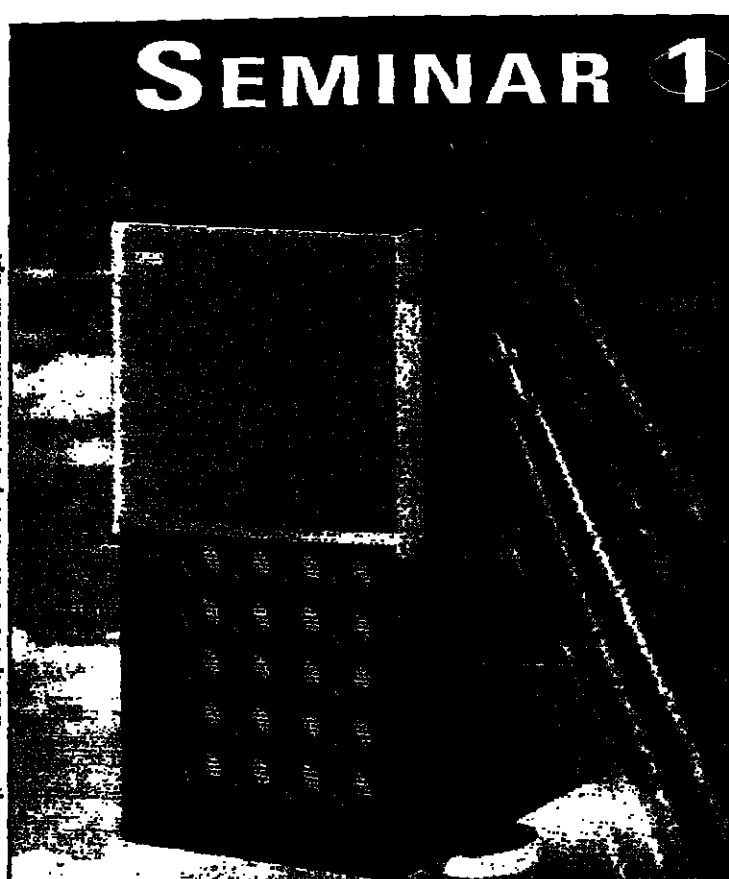
LIBERTY, the troubled London department store group, is cutting nearly 100 jobs in an attempt to reduce costs and improve financial performance.

Philip Bowman, the company's new chairman, also warned that it could be five years before shareholders achieve a reasonable return on their investment.

The gloomy prognosis was delivered to shareholders at a downbeat annual meeting in London yesterday. Mr Bowman also gave an update on current trading showing that sales had fallen by 1 per cent in the six months to August.

The company has stocks equivalent to 23 weeks of sales. The effect of mark-downs on these ranges will affect the group's first-half results, the chairman said.

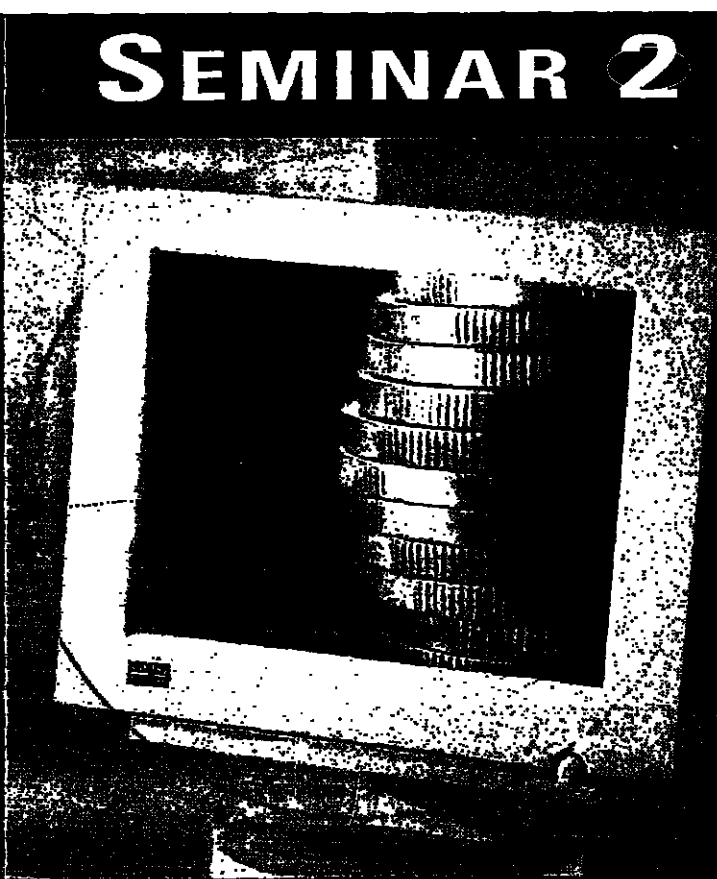
SIEMENS



Implementing a Small Business Server

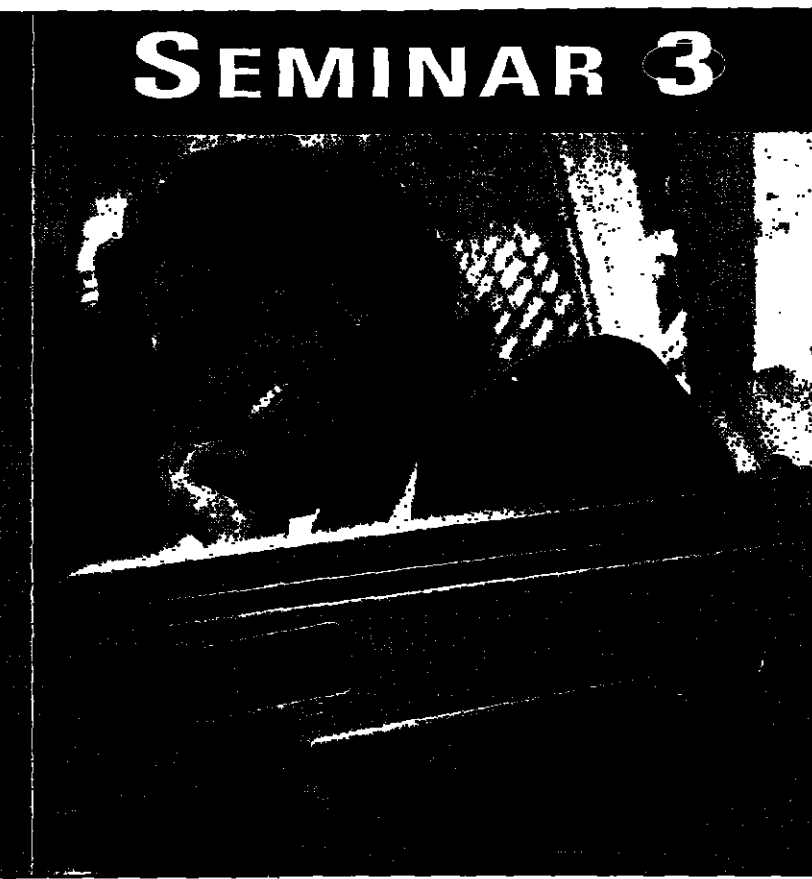
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SEMINAR PROGRAMME	
LOCATION	DATE
Scotland	1st September 1998
Midlands	2nd September 1998
South	3rd September 1998



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دکتر محمد صالح

Footsie advances but oil groups suffer

EQUITIES RETAINED their new summertime glow. Tuesday's heroic surge should have been followed by at least a gentle bout of consolidation. Yet Footsie, although closing below its high, managed a 48.1 points gain to 5,694.3.

But for Enterprise Oil and Lasso it was another downbeat session, bringing even closer the possibility they will be relegated from Footsie. If they are removed it will leave only the giants, British Petroleum and Shell, to represent the oil industry in the daily Footsie calculation.

Footsie's next composition meeting is due next month. On present form Lasso is a sure five casualty and Enterprise has little room for manoeuvre. Others fighting the drop include Smiths Industries and the last recruit the RMC building materials group.

Smiths was recently the subject of some order-driven trades. It pointed out that had they occurred on the Footsie reckoning day its place in the index would have been lost.

Enterprise was one of the worst performing Footsie constituents,

MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

falling 12p to 435p. Lasso lost 3p to 196.5p. The oil industry is suffering from the collapse in bulk oil prices which could fall even more if, as some suspect, the Russians step up production as part of its bid to earn much needed revenue.

British Airways, on the promise it would defy the Eurocrats over its London airports slots, if domestic regulators offered support, rose 30p to 518p. The Airline wants to sell 267 Heathrow and Gatwick slots but Brussels wants to give them away. UK regulators favour a sale.

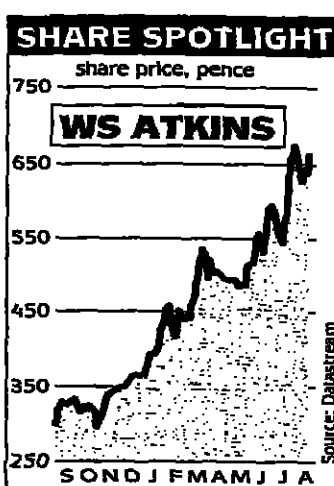
Vodafone, making investment presentations, dialled a 43.5p gain to 860p and HSBC, as the Hong Kong market reaped the benefit of more Government support, rose 46p to 1,369p.

At one time Footsie was up 64.6. It was buoyed by Hong Kong's advance, a former display in Tokyo and New York's overnight performance. The mid-cap index edged ahead and even the small cap, which had looked in terminal decline, managed to record a modest gain.

Rentokil, off 14p, at 365p, was hit by its unexpected failure to keep up its 20 per cent growth rate and National Power fell 21p to 559p as bid hopes faded. But PowerGen, on switching out of NP, hardened 31p to 780p.

Computer shares were in demand, thanks to the Micro Focus profits leap. Missy rose 11p to 2,730p and Sage 67.5p to 1,432.5p. Micro Focus added 17.5p to 480p.

The cream came off milk shares. Milk Marque, the industry regulator, is set to make a City presentation next week. Before then it is likely to slash wholesale milk prices, eroding the margins of the



dairies. Unigate fell 22p to 542.5p; Express 13.5p to 133p; but Robert Wiseman held at 191.5p. Northern Foods firmed to 182.5p as Merrill Lynch duly produced its buy recommendation. WS Atkins, the consultancy, hardened 30p to 665p, a shade from its peak. Merrill Lynch is less enthusiastic on short-term prospects but remains keen on the longer

view. It expects profits of £34.5m this year and £37.7m next.

Beers were weak after Deutsche Morgan Grenfell took a distinctly sober view of the industry. Even so Bass, one to attract a D&G downgrade, rose 80p to 975p. Whitbread, another target, fell 2p to 838p.

BAT Industries shaded to 680.5p. Penruddock is positive, believing the shares have enough puff to reach 800p. It is encouraged following the reshaping and suggests the shares have what amounts to a "junk bond" rating.

Imperial Chemical Industries, the subject of an early morning rogue trade, ended little changed at 690p although a profit warning by its German rival, Hoechst, ruffled sentiment. Zeneca, ICI's former subsidiary, improved 70p to 2,410p as Roche take over speculation continued.

Billiton, the mining group, hardened to 126.5p. Dresdner Kleinwort Benson upgraded its net income forecasts on the back of currency considerations. The investment

house is still thought to have up to 40 million shares on its books, currently showing a loss of £10m. It took 101 million shares from one of Billiton's major shareholders, a South African mutual called Sanlam. It has, it is thought, placed 60 million.

Henlys, battling for Dennis, shaded 4p to 501p as Volvo lifted its stake to 6.82 per cent.

Holiday shares were ruffled by planned capacity cut backs next summer. Airtrons fell 15.5p to 391.5p and First Choice 5p to 123.5p. Thomson lost 2.5p to 165p.

Alcan's shares, the garage group, reversed as bid talks ended. The voting shares fell 4.5p to 15p and the non-voting 4.5p to 12.5p.

But the prospect of bid action at Brooke Industrial, an engineer, prompted a 24p advance to 130p. Petra Diamond resisted a bear raid, ending 1p higher at 117p although its warrants dropped 7.5p to 87.5p. Waverley Mining, where bid talks have been abandoned, fell 0.5p to 7.5p.

ANOTHER BUY note on John Lusty, the food group. Collins Stewart expects profits to climb from £1.9m to £3.6m this year and then reach £4.2m.

The note describes the company as "a highly cash generative, defensive growth stock which is well placed to take advantage of the fragmented and lucrative specialist food market". The shares, at 10p, trade at a 50 per cent discount to its nearest competitor, WT Foods.

MINMET, traded on the Irish exploration market, firmed 0.75p to 9p.

Its 78 per cent-owned Credit Minerals (CM) subsidiary could be edging nearer to a Devon Gold strike: "that could lead to the discovery of further high-grade gold" in an area known as the Crediton Trough. A new drilling programme is to be carried out. CM is traded on the fringe Oxfex at 21.5p.

Rentokil finally slips up on the percentage play

SO, FAREWELL then, Mister Twenty Per Cent. For the past 13 years Sir Clive Thompson, chief executive of Rentokil, has consistently met his self-imposed target of raising the services group's earnings per share by at least a fifth. But in the first six months of this year Rentokil failed. And the title Mister 18.7 per cent just doesn't have the same ring to it.

To be fair, Rentokil didn't miss by much. Exclude the effects of the strong pound, which depressed the value of overseas profits, and earnings were up 26 per cent. But Sir Clive isn't making any excuses. And he is doggedly sticking to the target even though he admits it has become a bit of a millstone.

This looks unrealistic. Although Rentokil's profit performance was respectable, sales were not. Even allowing for exchange rates, revenue growth in the UK and Asia-Pacific was pedestrian. In North America sales actually fell as Rentokil sold unwanted businesses and pulled out of low-margin contracts. Only continental Europe, emerging from a prolonged downturn, lifted the gloom with a 17 per cent increase.

Sir Clive reckons Rentokil can meet its target without large acquisitions. But operating margins can only stretch so far and sooner or later the company will need a repeat of its 1996 acquisition of BET, with the resultant cost savings and efficiency gains.

Given its size, however, Rentokil will find suitable deals a lot harder to come by. And the suspicion remains that meeting the earnings target will be more about questionable accounting policies - Rentokil has decided not to write off goodwill on acquisitions against profits - than the growth.

Rentokil shares slipped 14p to 365p yesterday and are down 20 per cent from their June high. But they still trade on a chunky multiple of almost 30 times forecast full-year earnings. Given the uncertainty over Rentokil's future growth, the shares are high enough.

INVESTMENT

EDITED BY PETER THAL LARSEN

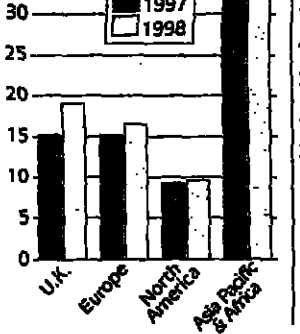
RENTOKIL: AT A GLANCE

Market value: £10.5bn, share price 365p (-19.9p)

Trading record	95	96	97	97	98
Turnover (£bn)	0.86	2.27	2.81	1.41	1.44
Pre-tax profits (£m)	215	318	417	194	230
Earnings per share (p)	7.11	8.57	10.32	4.74	5.63
Dividends per share (p)	2.10	2.53	3.06	0.89	1.07

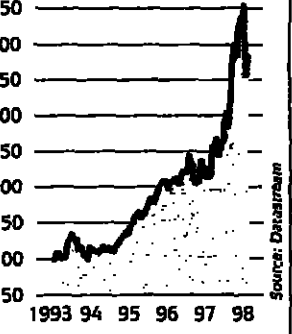
Operating Margin %

6 months to 30 June



Share price

pence



Weir engineers a profits bounce

AND NOW for something completely different - an engineer which does not complain about the strength of the pound and the Asian meltdown. Weir, the Scottish pumps and valves group, yesterday posted a 35 per cent increase in interim profits - to £37.4m - despite a fall in turnover.

And there is more: the group expects orders to bounce to a record level in the second half thanks to a couple of submarine contracts from the Ministry of Defence. Factor in Weir's bullish noises on acquisitions, and yesterday's 5p jump in the shares to 213p looks entirely justified.

Can the good times last? The answer is yes. For a start, Weir's geographical spread should protect it from any fur-

ther economic downturn in the UK. With businesses ranging from Sudan to China, the company is able to ride the peaks and troughs of different cycles, including the Asian roller-coaster.

Similarly, Weir's strategy of supplying its pumps and valves to completely different industries, from the naval sector to oil via power generation, should guarantee a reasonably stable order flow and avoid it becoming too reliant on one industry.

As with many engineers there is always a risk that a prolonged slump in the emerging markets where Weir operates could lead to project cancellations and delayed orders. But Weir's involvement in what it grandly calls "basic human needs" - electricity and water - makes a sudden slump in orders less likely than with some of its rivals.

The shares have had a pretty torrid time of late, as the gloom surrounding the engineering sector dragged them down from a year's high of 304.5p.

They are now trading on just nine times 1998 forecast earnings of around £55m. On such a large discount to the market, they are certainly worth a punt.

Game's plan is short of value

GAME, the computer games retailer, is a well-run business, but since it came to the market in June its shares have had all the appeal of a video nasty. Floated at 200p, they jumped to 280p in their first day but have been careering downhill ever since.

Yesterday they shed another 3p to 178p in spite of maiden full-year results which showed a jump in pre-tax profits from £406,000 to £7.2m.

This fall is less about the business itself and owes more to the hammering second-line stocks have been taking. Electronics Boutique, Game's main rival, has also suffered, and the high street is not exactly flavour of the month with investors.

Game's figures certainly look encouraging, though. Like-for-like sales soared by 46 per cent during the year, boosted by Sony Playstation and the launch of the rival Nintendo 64 games console at the beginning of 1997.

In current trading, same-store sales are still up by 11 per cent and the new 120-bit Sega machine is due out later this year or early next.

Store openings are continuing, with nine added in the year to take the total to 68. Game's plan is still to have 120 by May 2001.

On current-year forecasts of £10m the shares trade on a forward rating of 19. That looks a bit high even after recent weakness. There's better value elsewhere in the retail sector.

IN BRIEF

Leighton takes up Asda options

ALLAN LEIGHTON, the chief executive of Asda, has exercised his options under the executive share option scheme and the long-term incentive plan, buying 779,390 Asda shares at an average option price of 84p and selling the same number of shares at 185.25p a share. Mr Leighton's total holding of Asda shares is now 89,902, the company said.

Fall at Rosebys

ROSEBYS, the furniture retailer, added to the high street gloom, reporting a 5 per cent fall in same-store sales in current trading. The figure compares with a 20 per cent increase at the same time last year.

Although Rosebys' shares fell 7p to 156.5p, the company confirmed plans to increase its store portfolio from 450 to 510 under its Rosebys, Knightingales and Bensons Beds formats.

£48m train order

NATIONAL EXPRESS unveiled a £48m order for 20 new diesel trains for Central Trains. The rolling stock is due for delivery by June 2000. The trains will be 100-mph Turbostar diesels to be built by Adtranz in Derby and leased through Porterbrook Leasing Company. National Express has 113 new trains on order worth about £295m.

Meggitt contract

MEGGITT, the electronics company, is the latest beneficiary of London Transport's plans for a £1bn smartcard ticket system. Its Wayfarer subsidiary has won the first £21m instalment of a contract, expected to be worth more than £40m, to supply bus ticketing equipment and software.

BTR's £44m buy

INDUSTRIAL group BTR has bought a New Zealand telecoms power equipment company, Switchtec Power Systems, for a maximum consideration of £44m. Switchtec designs and makes direct-current equipment for telecoms applications and supplies it to Asia-Pacific and Latin American markets.

KKR pays £1bn for Hoechst paints

THE US venture capital giant Kohlberg Kravis Roberts (KKR) yesterday clinched one of the largest European buyout deals of the decade with the purchase of the paints division of the German chemical group Hoechst for more than £1bn.

KKR, which only last month bought the UK insurance broker Willis Corroon for £951m, said it was spending DM 3bn - its largest investment in Europe - to back a management buyout of Herberts, one of Europe's largest automotive paints makers.

The business, which last year had sales of DM2.7bn, was put up for sale earlier this year as part of Hoechst's plan to dispose of its chemical operations to become a pharmaceuticals

and life sciences group by 2000.

News of the disposal came as Hoechst indicated that consolidation in the pharmaceutical industry might force it to seek a partner for drug operations.

KKR, the American leverage buyout specialist, which shot to fame in the 1980s when its takeover of RJR Nabisco was immortalised in the book *Barbarians At The Gate*, said that the Herberts and Willis Corroon deals were part of a renewed drive into Europe.

Clifton Robbins, KKR general partner, said that Europe was becoming "a particularly fertile ground" for leveraged buyout specialists. Mr Robbins said, as large European cor-

porations refocus on core businesses, there would be "major opportunities" in the near term. Mr Robbins said that the company chose to buy Herberts for the "quality of its business and the quality of its management".

He said that KKR was planning to retain a stake in Herberts for a considerable time and noted that the average length of KKR's investments is "between 7 and 10 years". The existing Herberts' management, who yesterday bought an undisclosed stake in the business, will continue to run the business, he added.

Hoechst said yesterday that it was considering a separate float of its plastic and basic chemicals divisions.

Bug business slows but profits up at Micro Focus

MICRO FOCUS, the software group, yesterday reported that sales of products used to fix the year 2000 computer bug were flat in the second quarter of the year.

The news follows disappointing results from US software groups specialising in addressing the millennium bug problem, raising expectations that the boom sparked by the problem is fizzling out.

However Martin Waters, the chief executive of Micro Focus,

said it was too early to draw that conclusion. "I don't think you can say this is a trend," he said.

"It may be that revenues were affected because we reorganised our sales force halfway through the quarter."

Mr Waters added that projections for spending on the millennium bug remain strong. Gartner Group, the US market research firm, recently said that US companies are ex-

pecting to spend 44 per cent of their entire information technology budgets on the problem next year.

Sales of other Micro Focus products more than compensated for the slowdown, said Mr Waters. In the six months to June, pre-tax profits more than doubled to \$15.8m (£9.8m) on sales up 35 per cent to \$97m. Shares in the group, which is in the process of completing a \$200m merger with Intersolv, its US rival, closed up 17.5p to 480p.

COMPANY RESULTS

Name	Turnover (£)	Pre-tax (£)	EPS	Dividend	Pay day	Ex-Dividend
ADT International (I)	22.8m (12.3m)	0.885m (0.622m)	-	-	-	-
Airtrons (F)	25.8m (28.4m)	1.58m (1.41m)	26.7p (23.7p)	7.9p (7.4p)	14.10.98	14.08.98
Asda PLC (F)	77.5m (82.2m)	7.17m (6.40m)	56.2p (4.1p)	nil (20.2p)	-	-
Bankers Trust (F)	9.9m (10.6m)	1.355m (2.575m)	3.85p (2.49p)	0.84p (0.67p)	15.08.98	01.08.98
Micro Focus Group (F)	58.4m (41.2m)	10.06m (5.17m)	8.5p (4.5p)	nil (-)	-	-
Micro Focus (F)	36.12m (26.1m)	3.66m (4.1m)	7.02p (7.45p)	2.8p (2.7p)	26.10.98	01.08.98
WPP PLC (SPI)**	0.369m (0.257m)	-0.255m (0.068m)	-5.44p (2.46p)	nil (-)	-	-
Rentokil (I)	1.438m (1.41m)	225.5m (183.9m)	5.63p (4.74p)	1.07p (0.89p)	06.11.98	28.08.98
Rentokil PLC (I)	94.2m (88.3m)	3.68m (3.10m)	6.9p (6.2p)	3.2p (3.1p)	16.10.98	14.08.98
Weir Group PLC (I)	344.47m (284.902m)	37.38m (27.765m)	13.7p (10.0p)	2.75p (2.54p)	06.11.98	14.08.98

(F) - Final (I) - Interim (A) - Nine Month EPS is pre-taxation * Dividend to be paid as a 100p/50p (25p/12.5p) ** Includes 1997-1998 results

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

Country	Sterling	1 month	3 month	Dollar	Spot	1 month	3 month	D-Mark	Spot
UK	1.0000			0.6163	0.6174	0.6195	0.6242		
Australia	2.7233	2.7382	2.7298	1.6902	1.6905	1.6910	1.6938		
Belgium	60.723	60.723	60.723	12.652	12.652	12.652	12.652		
Canada	1.631	1.631	1.631	37.095	37.095	37.095	37.095		
Denmark	11.716	11.716	11.716	1.5329	1.5329	1.5329	1.5329		
France	1.631	1.631	1.631	1.6962	1.6962	1.6962	1.6962		
Germany	8.8699	8.8699	8.8699	4.9658	4.9658	4.9658	4.9658		
Greece	2.013	2.013	2.013	1.7954	1.7954	1.7954	1.7954		
Italy	2.013	2.013	2.013	302.25	302.25	302.25	302.25		
Japan	1.631	1.631	1.631	1.7912	1.7912	1.7912	1.7912		
South Korea	1.631	1.631	1.631	1.3941	1.3941	1.3941	1.3941		
Spain	1.631	1.631	1.631	1.7912	1.7912	1.7912	1.7912		
Sweden	1.631	1.631	1.631	1.3941	1.3941	1.3941	1.3941		
Switzerland	1.631	1.631	1.631	1.7912	1.7912	1.7912	1.7912		
Taiwan	1.631	1.631	1.631	1.3941	1.3941	1.3941	1.3941		
Thailand	1.631	1.631	1.631	1.3941	1.3941	1.3941	1.3941		
US	1.631	1.631	1.631	1.3941	1.3941	1.3941	1.3941		

INTEREST RATES

Country	3 month	1 yr	2 yr	5 yr	10 yr	30 yr
Australia	4.95	0.00	5.04	0.07	5.44	0.08
Belgium	3.53	0.00	3.78	0.00	4.09	0.01
Canada	4.85	-0.01	5.36	0.01	5.34	0.02
Denmark	4.72	0.00	4.24	0.00	4.22	0.00
France	4.14	-0.02	4.04	-0.02	3.95	0.02
Germany	4.00	0.00	3.68	0.00	3.86	0.01
Italy	3.50	0.00	3.73	0.00	3.71	0.01
Japan	4.00	-0.01	4.02	0.01	4.08	0.03
Netherlands	3.45	-0.02	3.75	0.00	3.82	0.00
Spain	4.17	0.00	3.95	0.00	4.14	0.01
Sweden	4.16	0.03	4.20	0.04	4.27	0.04
Switzerland	1.84	-0.04	2.05	-0.06	1.98	-0.01
Taiwan	7.30	0.00	7.64	0.00	6.64	0.04
US	4.93	-0.02	4.99	0.02	5.35	0.01

MONEY MARKET RATES

	Overnight Bid Offer	1 week Bid Offer	1 month Bid Offer	3 months Bid Offer	6 months Bid Offer	1 year Bid Offer
Treasury Bills		7.40 7.30	7.40 7.30			
LIBOR						
Domestic Depos	5.00 7.50	7.50 7.63	7.39 7.66	7.03 7.69	7.63 7.69	7.53 7.59
Eurocurrency Depos	7.56 7.69	7.56 7.69	7.63 7.75	7.63 7.69	7.63 7.75	7.56 7.63
Flight/Bank Bills		7.46 7.38		7.42 7.34	7.34 7.26	
Swearing CDs		7.42 7.35		7.05 7.57	7.05 7.57	7.57 7.50
Commercial CDs		5.50	5.50			
ECU Deposits		4.06 4.19		4.03 4.16	3.72 4.03	

www.bloomberg.com/uk	Source: Bloomberg
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SPORT

Cricket: Batting options must be carefully considered against Sri Lanka for today's Triangular final at Lord's

England
adjust to
tactical
advances

TO PINCH hit or not to pinch hit? That is the question facing both England and Sri Lanka in today's final of the Emirates Triangular Tournament at Lord's. So far, the tactic, used to maximise scoring in the first 15 overs when fielding restrictions are in place, has not been a rampant success. Unless a change in fortune is due, the outcome of the match could rest upon which team best utilises the middle and end overs, rather than those at the beginning.

One-day cricket is a game that is constantly evolving. What works well for a few years suddenly becomes clichéd, as players become wise to the methods employed. For that reason, being a one-trick wonder has a limited shelf life and, having reinvented one-day batting in the last World Cup, Sri Lanka may have difficulty in reining back.

The key, as to most things these days, is flexibility, especially in England where the pitches and the white ball offer the new-ball bowlers extra movement. According to Sri Lanka, the ball being used is too hard. If it is, the extra hardness should suit their hitters more, a suggestion borne out by the fact that each total in the competition to date has exceeded 300.

The evidence proving the folly of pinch hitting in Blighty, if not categorical, is certainly persuasive. In the six innings so far played in this tournament, the scores after 15 overs have been 102-3, 41-1, 87-2, 67-4, 76-3, and 73-2. Apart from Nick Knight, who scored a high-quality 74 on Tuesday in the match England lost to South Africa, none of the openers in the tournament has passed 36.

As used to be the case, the bulk of the scoring in all three games has come from those batting from No 3 to No 5 in the order, with Graeme Hick and Alec Stewart doing the bulk of the damage the last time these two sides met. Unless the Sri Lanka openers, Sanath Jayasuriya and Romesh Kaluwitharana, can overcome the new ball, expect Aravinda de Silva and Arjuna Ranatunga to return the compliment.

If the instinct to hit early on is resisted, the main skirmish for control will take place in the middle overs. With the increase in gaps decreasing the risks needed to be taken by batsmen, flicking will be vital during this period. Dropped catches, or anything more than the odd fumble, could cost the offending side dear.

It is during this phase of the game



DEREK PRINGLE

that England could make things difficult for Sri Lanka, especially if Alan Mullally and Robert Croft continue to apply the squeeze that has followed the timely incursions made by Darren Gough with the new ball. Ever since his show-stealing performance at Headingley in the final Test, Gough has bowled superbly well. With him offering the pace and Peter Martin the outswing, Sri Lanka's batsmen should not be able to take liberties lightly.

Indeed, the home side's sole

With Darren Gough offering pace and Peter Martin outswing, Sri Lanka's batsmen should not take liberties lightly

has twice collapsed in a heap. Such fragility—possibly the consequence of playing too many specialist bowlers—is sure to affect the top order, who must now be more cautious, and therefore more inhibited, than they otherwise might.

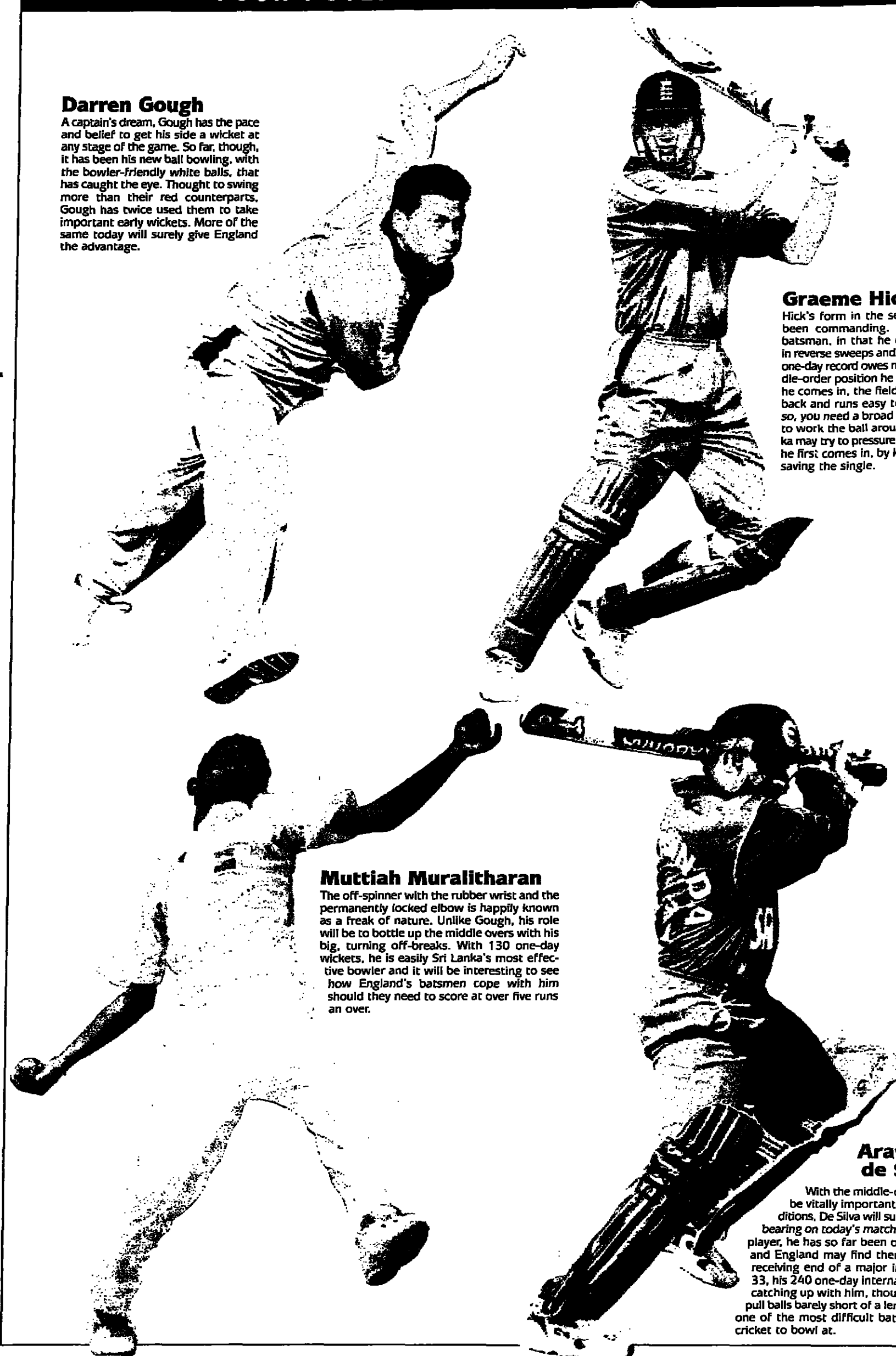
Hollioake's lack of form poses another dilemma. As Stewart's understudy as captain, the selectors—they will probably want him to captain England in Bangladesh while Stewart leads with the Ashes squad in Australia—need him to be in the side and playing well. So far, with both bat and ball, he has been anonymous at best, and he should really be replaced for today's match by Matthew Fleming, had the Kent man not been sent back to his county.

Alternatively, as Hollioake has bowled just seven overs in two matches, England could drop Alistair Brown down the order and open instead with Michael Atherton. So far the Lancashire opener, along with the economical Angus Fraser has experienced something of a busman's holiday. Perhaps it is time for at least one of them to don their blue pyjamas.

FOUR POTENTIAL TOURNAMENT-WINNERS

Darren Gough

A captain's dream, Gough has the pace and belief to get his side a wicket at any stage of the game. So far, though, it has been his new ball bowling, with the bowler-friendly white balls, that has caught the eye. Thought to swing more than their red counterparts, Gough has twice used them to take important early wickets. More of the same today will surely give England the advantage.



Graeme Hick

Hick's form in the series so far has been commanding. A conventional batsman, in that he doesn't indulge in reverse sweeps and the like, his fine one-day record owes much to the middle-order position he occupies. When he comes in, the fields are invariably back and runs easy to pick up. Even so, you need a broad range of stroke to work the ball around and Sri Lanka may try to pressure him more when he first comes in, by keeping men up saving the single.

Muttiah Muralitharan

The off-spinner with the rubber wrist and the permanently locked elbow is happily known as a freak of nature. Unlike Gough, his role will be to bottle up the middle overs with his big, turning off-breaks. With 130 one-day wickets, he is easily Sri Lanka's most effective bowler and it will be interesting to see how England's batsmen cope with him should they need to score at over five runs an over.

Aravinda de Silva

With the middle-order proving to be vitally important in English conditions, De Silva will surely have a large bearing on today's match. A big occasion player, he has so far been ominously quiet and England may find themselves on the receiving end of a major innings. Almost 33, his 240 one-day internationals may be catching up with him, though an ability to pull balls barely short of a length makes him one of the most difficult batsmen in world cricket to bowl at.

Westwood aims to loosen Monty's grip

THE SEASON'S final major, glory's last chance, was the way last week's 50th USPGA Championship was billed on television in America. Mark O'Meara, with a double portion, Lee Janzen and Vijay Singh having scooped up the 1998's quota of glory, it is back to the day job. There are still plenty of dollops of cash to be handed out, not least at the K Club on Sunday.

Just west of Dublin, along the Irish equivalent of the M4, the club is the pride and joy of Dr Michael Smurfit, of the Jefferson Smurfit Group, and features a course designed by Arnold Palmer. It is a front-runner to stage the Ryder Cup when it comes to Ireland in 2005 and hosting the European Open and putting up a purse of £1.25m should help their cause.

The prize fund, a record for the European Tour outside the Open with a first cheque of £208,300, should also boost the claims of those involved in the race for the No 1 spot on the money list. Also known as the Order of Merit and, to the commercially aware, the Volvo Ranking, the actual prize at stake is the Vardon Trophy and has sat for

the last five years on the sideboard of Colin Montgomerie's living room.

Lee Westwood, with three victories, currently heads the money list by £122,000 from Darren Clarke, with Montgomerie a further £30,000 behind in third. Someone else could jump into contention by winning the huge pot on offer this week, although a win for the visiting Payne Stewart would not upset Clarke if he cannot win. For most of the season, no one had their sights on the money title, but that has changed now the majors have come and gone.

"It would be daft not to have a real go now," said Westwood. The leading three all finally rejected initial thoughts of staying in America after the USPGA for the International and the World Series tournaments and have effectively cleared their schedules for the run-in. The next seven weeks could be decisive but there is then a gap until the season's finale at Montecastillo in Spain at the end of October.

"It is leading up to an exciting finish and it would be great to go to the Volvo Masters with four or five guys in with a chance as opposed to Monty dominating all the time,"

Andy Farrell, in Co Kildare, looks at the race to be Europe's best as the big guns set their sights on the season's run-in

Clarke said. "Monty has been there before and we all know what he is capable of if he turns on the style. He will be the guy to push whoever is leading down the stretch."

The Scot is considered the man to beat, with Westwood adding: "I don't have a figure in mind that I need to get to—just £1 more than Monty will do me." But Mont-

EUROPEAN MONEY LIST

EUROPEAN ORDER OF MERIT

THE RACE AT THE TOP

Events	Money
1 Lee Westwood (Eng).....12	£590,385
2 Darren Clarke (N Ir).....10	£472,223
3 Colin Montgomerie (Sco).....10	£442,057
4 Ernie Els (SA).....9	£386,759
5 Thomas Bjorn (Den).....14	£378,005
6 Jose Maria Olazabal (Sp).....13	£353,543
7 Patrik Sjolund (Swe).....18	£353,306
8 Stephen Leaney (Aus).....15	£260,435
9 Andrew Coltart (Sco).....17	£249,250

10 Stephen Allan (Aus).....16	£245,339
11 David Carter (Eng).....18	£233,055
12 Peter Baker (Eng).....16	£216,129
13 Ian Woosnam (Wal).....11	£212,651
14 Gary Orr (Sco).....19	£190,391
15 David Howell (Eng).....19	£184,550

THE RACE AT THE BOTTOM

Only the top 116 players retain their Tour cards for next year	
116 Fabrice Sarda (Fr).....18	£35,932
235 Justin Rose (Eng).....2	£0
Final player to retain his card last year	
116 Rolf Muniz (Neth).....27	£50,564

nately, that does not make pleasant reading, down from a career high of second two years ago to seventh. "That's going in the wrong direction," he conceded.

His collapse at the USPGA, when he was lying second after 36 holes, to finish 44th, has prompted action, however. "My long game was never so bad," he said. "You can't aim at the pin when you don't know whether the ball is going right or left."

As soon as Montgomerie left the course on Sunday, he phoned his old coach, Bill Ferguson. The pair have not worked together since Monty

missed the cut in the Open and the USPGA in 1996, apart from a brief "fix" at the Ryder Cup last year. "That seemed to work and hopefully we can work together on a more permanent basis," Montgomerie said.

The reasons for the split in the first place were never obvious, least of all to Ferguson, who first taught Montgomerie to play the game as a child in Yorkshire. But the results were swift. "Bill spotted the problem right away. I'm not saying it's perfect, but it is a hell of a lot better than it was and I'm excited about playing with a fade again. A fade is the only safe, risk-free way of golf at this level, especially when it is your job. As the saying goes, you can talk to a fade but a book doesn't listen."

It was a hooked tee shot that cost Montgomerie victory in a play-off for the Irish Open last month, a tournament where he had stated that he was in no need of a coach. His experiences since, which included another missed cut at the Open, have persuaded him otherwise. "Although it worked OK, then, it was still fragile. Now, it's getting more solid."

Down at the other end of the



Montgomerie: No 1 for five years

money list, Justin Rose plays his third tournament as a professional. He is still looking to make his first cut and has only four other events in which to try and earn his Tour card, something that will take in the region of £55,000.

County Championship: Title chasers frustrated by Nottinghamshire as Killeen puts Lancashire under pressure

Surrey held at bay by Read

BY JON CULLEY
at Trent Bridge

Nottinghamshire v Surrey

THE YEAR is shaping into a momentous one indeed for Alec Stewart, who will lead England into the final of the Emirates Triangular Tournament at Lord's today cheered by the knowledge that his county is edging closer to a first Championship in 27 years.

In Stewart's absence here yesterday, the current leaders began a critical sequence of three matches away from The Oval by emphatically taking the upper hand against Nottinghamshire, where their prospects of making short work of the home side were seriously inconvenienced only late in the day by a doughty half-century from the England A wicket-keeper, Chris Read.

Their performance emphasised the versatility of a team often forced to manage without their principal players. Stewart apart, they have no Adam Hogg or Ally Brown because of England selection, and Graham Thorpe remains injured.

Yet they were not unduly hampered. Nor were they put off their stride by Nottinghamshire's attempt to minimise the threat posed by Saqlain Mustaq, the Pakistani off-spinner, by preparing a green wicket. When he called the toss right, the temptation for Mark Butcher, standing in as captain, would surely have

been to bat first in the hope that, by the fourth innings, conditions might suit Saqlain and his leg-spinning teammate, Ian Salisbury. Instead, Butcher backed his seam attack to make the pitch work in his favour.

For the most part, a positive decision paid a worthwhile dividend. Joey Benjamin produced a prolonged opening spell that rocked the home side back on their heels at 65 for 5. With the pitch offering uneven bounce and Nottinghamshire's batsmen deficient in getting into line, Benjamin's first 10 overs yielded the wickets of Guy Welton, Usman Azeem and Paul Johnson, all caught behind.

Once Benjamin tired, there was always the reliable Martin Bicknell to keep up the momentum. After lunching on 80 for 5, Nottinghamshire lost Paul Franks and Graham Archer, both pounced by Butcher at second slip, to be 112 for 7.

By now the match was looking embarrassingly one-sided but at last Read injected some conviction into the batting. The 20-year-old, who left Gloucestershire to take his chance at Trent Bridge, is no mean strokeplayer, whom many expect to graduate to the senior international ranks provided his glove work develops. His unbeaten 66, spanning two and a half hours and 117 balls with 10 boundaries, underpinned the addition of 101 runs for the last three wickets, with Paul Strang and Andy Oram chipping in with valuable support.



Kent's David Fulton is helped to his feet after being struck on the leg by a shot from Worcestershire's Philip Weston at Canterbury yesterday

Robert Hallam

Wasim rescues Red Rose

ROUND-UP

WASIM AKRAM rescued title-chasing Lancashire from a disastrous start in their county championship game against Durham at Chester-le-Street yesterday.

Going in at 43 for 5 after choosing to bat, the Pakistani all-rounder, Lancashire's captain, hit a season's best 68 then took the first three Durham wickets.

Things looked bleak for Durham at 35 for 3 in reply to 196, especially as the former Lancashire player Nick Speak had to be helped off with a knee injury after taking a diving catch. But Jon Lewis and Paul Collingwood stopped the

rot to take them to 73 for 3 at tea. While Lancashire were without their three England one-day men, Durham had three front-line bowlers injured. Martin Speight's illness allowed Andrew Pratt to make his championship debut behind the stumps.

Two bowlers making their first championship appearances of the season, Lancashire's Paul Ridgway and Durham's Neil Killeen, seized their chances in contrasting style. Ridgway, without a run in his two previous first-class games, made 35 and helped Akram put on 67 for the ninth wicket, while Killeen took a career-best 5 for 49.

With the ball moving off the seam on a lively pitch, the 22-year-old Killeen bowled John Crawley and Neil Fairbrother with successive balls in his second over.

There were a number of rash strokes as Lancashire continued to score at more than four an over, and Wasim had 11 fours in his 44-ball half century.

Wasim, who passed a fitness test on his toe before play, had a spell of 3 for 1 in 12 balls as he bowled eight overs before retiring to the dressing-room.

Tom Moody was run out on 41 and Phil Weston caught by Ed Smith off Min Patel for 60 to curb Worcestershire's charge at Canterbury after they had won the toss against Kent and elected to bat.

It left Abdul Hafeez (22no) and David Leatherdale (20no) to see them through to tea on 211 for four.

Northamptonshire's Tony Penberthy withstood Dougie Brown's opening assault for Warwickshire to remain unbeaten on 110 at tea at Northampton.

Together with David Ripley, Penberthy put on 195 for the fifth wicket before Ripley was caught by Keith Piper off Tim Manton two short of his century.

Earlier Brown blasted away a four of Warwickshire's wickets in the first 19 overs to leave the home side struggling on 53 for four before Penberthy and Ripley came to the rescue.

Now Hancock takes the stick to Essex

BY DAVID LLEWELLYN
at Colchester

Essex v Gloucestershire

THERE IS one T Hancock whom Essex do not find in the least amusing.

Gloucestershire's Tim is a far different proposition from the late comedian, Tury. For a start he was entertaining a large crowd at Castle Park for almost four hours. But what gets up Essex's piny is the fact that he is beginning to make it a habit of piling up career-best scores against the County Championship's bottom club.

The first time was in 1994 when he made 123 at Chelmsford, but yesterday's innings improved on that by a dozen runs and will have given the Berkshire-born batsman far more satisfaction, coming as it did just when fourth-placed Gloucestershire are attempting to step up the pressure on the leaders, Surrey, and the rest of the chasing pack.

It was also the 26-year-old's initial first-class hundred of the season and finally realised the potential that he has been showing thus far this summer. Hancock had passed fifty on five previous occasions without being able to turn them into the all important ton - the most recent came in his previous innings against Kent in the last match - but significantly for Gloucestershire four of those five half-centuries have come in matches that have ended up in victory.

This, the fifth hundred of his first-class career, was a non-nonsense affair; competent and

assured. He punctuated some thoughtful batting with some exhilarating shots to the boundary.

Very few areas escaped Hancock's searing drives and savage cuts which brought him 21 fours in all, and once he had reached the sanctuary of three figures he allowed himself the luxury of a straight-driven six off Peter Such's off-spin.

Shortly after bringing up the hundred partnership (his second of the innings) with his captain Mark Alleyne, who continued his good form with a sound 47, Hancock perished. He attempted a pull shot but only succeeded in presenting the bowler, Danny Law, with a simple return catch, a tame end to his 211-ball innings.

Hancock had previously shared in a second wicket stand of 123 with the promising Dominic Hewson, before, in the second over after lunch, the latter hung out his bat to give Jamie Grove his second wicket, caught behind.

Grove's first wicket had come some two hours earlier when Rob Cumliffe pushed forward too tentatively and wicket-keeper Barry Hyam snapped up the resulting edge. But on a better of a batting track wickets were as difficult to come by as presidential confessions and Gloucestershire continued to pile up the runs and the invaluable batting bonus points. Yorkshire are without Paul Hutchison, who has a broken right thumb, for today's Championship game against Glamorgan at Cardiff. His place goes to another left-arm seam bowler, Ryan Sidebottom.

Weston adds sparkle to meaningless fixture

BY JOHN COLLIS
at Taunton

Somerset v Derbyshire

THIS is precisely the sort of late-season fixture to give weight to the argument for two divisions in the County Championship, with promotion to play for, relegation to avoid and members to appease.

By chance, these clubs would be lying in second and third places in the lower ranking, separated by a single point and both buoyed up by securing their fourth victories of the season in the previous round.

In close finishes, Derbyshire beat Worcestershire and Somerset inched out a tense win against Northamptonshire - two further opponents who would, under the more com-

petitive two-tier system, be jostling for promotion. As it is, all they can hope for is to give their supporters some belated reasons to be cheerful with a little improvement in the last month.

Local talent is always to be cherished in the increasingly free market of county cricket, and they come no more local here than the 18-year-old left-arm seam bowler Matthew Bulbeck, back in the first team after nursing a side strain. His ebullient bowling fitted neatly back into a Somerset attack led by an in-form and fully focused Andy Caddick. Yesterday's most generous haul, however, went to Caddick's most reliable attacking partner, Graham Rose.

Derbyshire chose first use of a greenish wicket and went for their shots as if this was a two-

day match. Captain Dominic Cork returned after sitting out the victory over Worcester, though when it came his turn to bat he could only shuffle across his stumps to be bowled behind his legs. The Derby total of 290 owed most to three younger players - Robin Weston, a valuable acquisition from Durham in the winter, hit 73, and Ben Spindlove and Ian Blackwell, who were both cheated of sprightly half-centuries by over-eagerness. Derbyshire's entertaining effort had detained them for just 65.5 overs, and was dotted with 52 boundaries.

Somerset's ideas of compiling a first innings advantage by more cautious means were struck a treble blow after tea, however, when Kevin Dean and Cork soon reduced the home side to 11 for 3.

BY MIKE CAREY
at Leicester

Leicestershire v Middlesex

THEY MAY find it rather surprising South of the Thames or West of the Pennines, but Leicestershire started this match yesterday on a perfectly decent, brand new pitch. Equally surprised, no doubt but very grateful were Middlesex even though they found themselves at 20 for 4 early on.

It could have been the sort of disaster they hardly needed after their two-day defeat at Here, but centuries of vastly different character by Paul Weekes and Mark Ramprakash, who added 229 for the fifth wicket, put everything into perspective.

True, the pitch had a greenish tinge to it and the ball moved around early on. But a hot, cloudless day was always meant for batting, even if Mid-

dlesex's early efforts suggested a collective loss of footwork, which invariably happens when confidence is low.

At that stage Vince Wells, swinging the ball from a requisite full length, cleaned out three batsmen for one run in six overs. He then went off for treatment to an injured knee.

By the time he was able to bowl again, the ball had lost its hardness, was moving around less and Weekes and Ramprakash had got the taste of battle.

If that was a break for Middlesex, this pair richly deserved it. Ramprakash is clearly the most talented England batsman (one wonders why he is not with the one-day squad) but he ventured nothing exotic, simply digging in and dealing with the moving ball by playing very straight and well forward.

Weekes matched him in that respect and was no less bloody-minded. His left-handedness was no doubt an irritation to an

attack that seemed unable to avoid bowling one bad ball an over as the day wore on. That Weekes could not always time everything to his satisfaction probably worked to his favour; too, several half-hit shots narrowly avoided the field.

But he should have gone at 50 when Wells, placed in the old fashioned position of leg slip precisely for the purpose, failed to hold a fast chance off the face of the bat. Then, at 91, Jonathan Dakin deceived him with a slower ball but the mistimed stroke dropped short of extra cover.

Between times, though, Weekes enjoyed himself on the back foot and tucked into anything short. His hundred, made from 200 balls with 14 fours and a hooked six, was his first for two years. Ramprakash reached three figures from 230 balls with 14 fours until, not for the first time this season, he looked disappointed to be given out caught at the wicket.

CRICKET SCOREBOARD

Britannic Assurance Championship

Durham v Lancashire

Lancashire won toss			
Lancashire - First innings			
	Runs	As	Bs
N Wood c Pratt b Wood	14	0	2
J P Crawley b Killeen	4	0	1
N H Fairbrother b Killeen	0	0	1
A Pinnitt b Wood	2	0	0
G D Lloyd c Collingwood b Lugsden	15	0	1
I W K Hogg c Speight b Killeen	0	0	2
W M Azeem c Lewis b Wood	62	0	13
G Yates b Killeen	0	0	1
G Chapple b Lugsden	15	0	2
P M Ridgway c Morris b Killeen	35	1	4
G Keedy not out	5	0	1
Extras (10 lb 60 nb)	21		
Total (for 6, 58.5 overs)	196		
Falls: 1-25, 2-29, 3-35, 4-107, 5-107, 6-121.			
to Bat: N J Speak, N Killeen, J P Seale, S Lugsden.			
Bowling: W M Azeem 8-2-27-3, G Chapple 7-0-30-0, P M Ridgway 7-5-13-3, A Pinnitt 4-0-17-0, G Keedy 4-0-11-0.			
Umpires: B Clouston and R Julian.			
Durham - First innings			
	Runs	As	Bs
J B Lewis not out	51	0	7
J E Morris bow b Akram	12	0	1
J A Bailey b Akram	0	0	1
D C Boon c Pinnitt b Akram	3	0	0
P D Collingwood c Hogg b Ridgway	36	0	5
M W Azeem c Pratt b Wood	35	0	5
J Wood c Pinnitt b Ridgway	10	0	2
Extras (6 lb 10 nb)	9		
Total (for 6, 39.5 overs)	152		
Falls: 1-25, 2-29, 3-35, 4-107, 5-107, 6-121.			
to Bat: N J Speak, N Killeen, J P Seale, S Lugsden.			
Bowling: W M Azeem 8-2-27-3, G Chapple 7-0-30-0, P M Ridgway 7-5-13-3, A Pinnitt 4-0-17-0, G Keedy 4-0-11-0.			
Umpires: B Clouston and R Julian.			

Essex v Gloucestershire

Gloucestershire won toss			
Gloucestershire - First innings			
	Runs	As	Bs
R J Cumliffe c Hyam b Grove	135	1	21
T H C Hancock c Hyam b Grove	44	1	3
D R Henson c Hyam b Grove	47	1	5
M N Laidwell not out	11	0	2
G J Kennis not out	3	0	0
Extras (10 lb 10 nb)	39		
Total (for 4, 30.5 overs)	239		
Falls: 1-25, 2-29, 3-35, 4-107, 5-107, 6-121.			
to Bat: N J Speak, N Killeen, J P Seale, S Lugsden.			
Bowling: W M Azeem 8-2-27-3, G Chapple 7-0-30-0, P M Ridgway 7-5-13-3, A Pinnitt 4-0-17-0, G Keedy 4-0-11-0.			
Umpires: B Clouston and R Julian.			

Northamptonshire v Warwickshire

Northamptonshire won toss			
Northamptonshire - First innings			
	Runs	As	Bs
A L Penberthy not out	129	2	18
R J Bailey c Piper b Brown	0	0	3
M B Lloyd c Lara b Brown	1	0	0
K J Barnett c Piper b Brown	17	0	3
G F Archer c Boucher b Brown	4	0	0
D R Henson c Piper b Manton	38	0	16
G P Swann b Siddons	32	2	4
J P Taylor not out	0	0	5
Extras (12 lb 10 nb)	26		
Total (for 6, 59.4 overs)	209		
Falls: 1-10, 2-18, 3-44, 4-52, 5-247, 6-305.			
to Bat: D Pollard, J Brown, D E Malcolm.			
Bowling: M P Bicknell 25-8-64-2, J E Benjamin 16-2-59-3, G C Hollis 15-5-45-3, Captain Manton 10-3-30-1, M A Burcher 4-1-12-0.			
Umpires: J H Hampshire and K E Palmer.			

Leicestershire v Middlesex

Leicestershire won toss			
Leicestershire - First innings			
	Runs	As	Bs
D J Goodchild b Ormond	0	0	1
N Langer c Noun b Wells	230	0	1
M R Ramprakash c Noun b Simmons	110	0	15
M W Gatting bow b Wells	0	0	1
O A Shah b Wells	2	0	0
P M Wicket not out	12	1	1
Extras (10 lb 10 nb)	11		
Total (for 5, 38.2 overs)	279		
Falls: 1-1, 2-18, 3-18, 4-20, 5-248.			
to Bat: J C Baze, J P Hewitt, R L Johnson, P C R Tufnell.			
Bowling: D J Munn 15-2-53-0, J Ormond 17-7-37-1, V J Wells 13-5-27-3, P V Simmons 22-6-62-1, J M Dakin 15-2-45-0, M T Bringsom 12-5-38-0, D J Maddy 4-2-11-0.			
Umpires: R Palmer and R A White.			

Nottinghamshire v Surrey

Surrey won toss			
Nottinghamshire - First innings			
	Runs	As	Bs
G E Welton c Batty b Benjamin	23	0	3
J F B Gillian c Boucher b Hollis	23	0	3
U Azeem c Batty b Benjamin	8	0	2
P Johnson c Batty b Benjamin	8	0	1
C M Tolley c Hollis b Bicknell	4	0	0
C M Tolley c Boucher b Hollis	8	0	1
T C W Read not out	10	0	1
P A Strang not out	18	0	1
K P Farquhar c Shukla b Mushaq	6	0	1
A R Drans b Hollis	13	0	1
Extras (10 lb 10 nb)	15		
Total (for 5, 38.2 overs)	215		
Falls: 1-1, 2-18, 3-47, 4-51, 5-65, 6-92, 7-112, 8-157, 9-173.			
to Bat: M P Bicknell 25-8-64-2, J E Benjamin 16-2-59-3, G C Hollis 15-5-45-3, Captain Manton 10-3-30-1, M A Burcher 4-1-12-0.			
Umpires: J H Hampshire and K E Palmer.			

Somerset v Derbyshire

Derbyshire won toss			
Derbyshire - First innings			
	Runs	As	Bs
M J Slater c Turner b Caddick	15	0	3
R M May bow b Bulbeck	4	0	1
M S Westcott c Kallis b Caddick	73	0	14
K J Barnett not out	0	0	5
M E Cresser c Turner b Rose	4	0	1
B J Spindlove c Bowler b Pearson	49	0	11
I D Blackwell b Bulbeck	44	0	8
D G Cork b Bulbeck	0	0	5
H K Killeen not out	10	0	2
P A J DeFreitas c Kallis b Rose	32	0	7
K J Dean c Westcott b Rose	1	0	1
Extras (10 lb 10 nb)	18		
Total (for 6, 59.4 overs)	209		
Falls: 1-26, 2-51, 3-124, 4-132, 5-172, 6-246, 7-246, 8-250, 9-287.			
to Bat: A R Caddick 21-6-73-2, G D Rose 15-5-175-4, M Bulbeck 12-2-67-3, K A Persons 13-0-60-0, A R K Pearson 3-1-8-1.			
Umpires: J H Hampshire and K E Palmer.			

Today's fixtures

11am matches started			
EMIRATES TRIANGULAR TOURNAMENT - FINAL (One day)			
Lancashire v Surrey (10.45)			
BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP (First day of four)			
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Yorkshire (Second day of four)			
Sunderland: Durham v Lancashire, Gloucestershire v Gloucestershire, Canterbury: Kent v Worcestershire, Leicestershire v Worcestershire, Middlesex v Northamptonshire, Warwickshire v Warwickshire, West Indies: Nottinghamshire v Surrey, Somerset v Derbyshire.			

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Fallon wins glory, Ryan gets the pain

BY GREG WOOD
at York

THERE ARE those who would deny jockeys the right to earn a few extra pounds with adverts on their breeches. You can only hope that some of them were among the thousands crammed onto the Knavesmire yesterday, when the Ebor Handicap brought more glory for Kieren Fallon, but only pain and injury for Willie Ryan, who was left prone on the turf by the two-furlong pole after a fall into the midst of the field just as it reached maximum speed.

Ryan suffered rib and suspected internal injuries when Street General clipped the heels of Dream Of Nurmi and came down. Theatreworld and Cash Amussen could not avoid him, and they too hit the turf. Theatreworld trampling Ryan in process. Amussen was able to walk away, but Ryan was taken by ambulance to York General Hospital. Last night, he was reported to be talking to the nursing staff and awaiting X-rays. He was detained overnight for observation.

How different was Fallon's experience on the Knavesmire yesterday, with victory in each of the three most important races on the card. This could only be good news too for Henry Cecil, who sent out both

Catchascatchcan, in the Yorkshire Oaks, and Tuning, the winning favourite in the Ebor Handicap, although as a further reminder of the fine line jockeys tread, Cecil also saddled Street General.

By the sort of standards they like to set at Warren Place, this had not been an outstanding season for Cecil before yesterday. In Tuning and Catchascatchcan, however, he has two three-year-old fillies before them, the only problem being the division of labour over the next couple of months. The Park Hill Stakes at Doncaster next month, the St Leger at the same meeting, and the Prix Vermeille are the obvious possibilities.

Yesterday's haul was a little over £200,000, which still leaves Cecil a distant second to Godolphin in the trainers' championship.

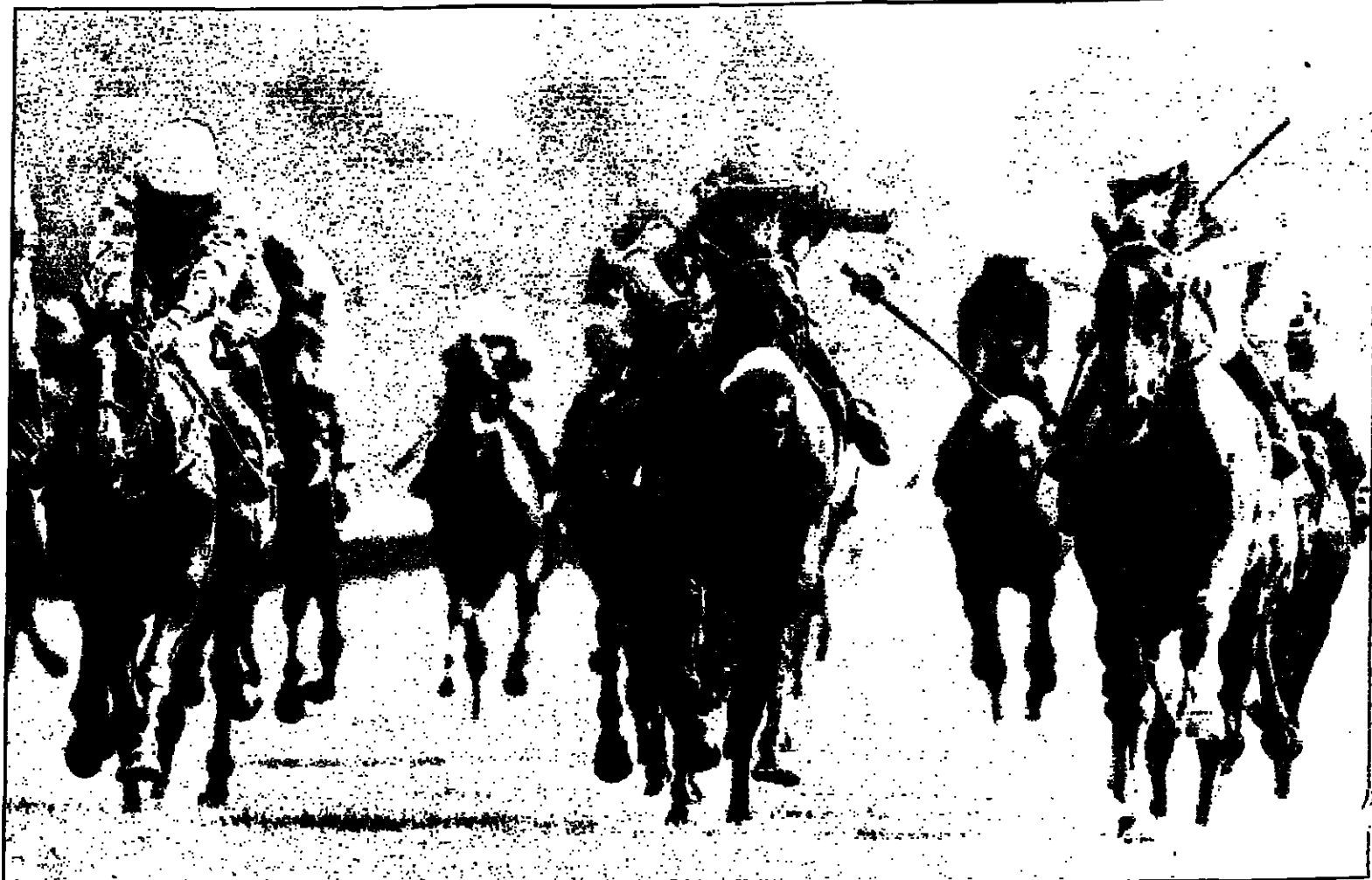
His personal satisfaction, though, will have been immense. Catchascatchcan was the first Yorkshire Oaks winner to carry Lord Howard de Walden's apricot colours, and the 85-year-old owner, one of Cecil's most loyal supporters, was there - complete with an apricot rose in his buttonhole - to greet her.

Better still was the victory of Tuning, who was backed down to 9-2 favourite for the Ebor and

was never in any serious danger as Fallon steered a careful path around the Knavesmire. Those who backed Yorkshire - and yes, this next comment comes straight from the pocket - will feel that he would have gone close had his jockey not decided to start his run in Lancashire. In the end, though, Fallon and Tuning probably had a good deal more in reserve had it been required.

Cecil, in fact, implied afterwards that Tuning is every bit as good as Catchascatchcan. Should they ever come face to face on the racecourse - in the Arc, perhaps? - the opportunity to ride Fallon's reject would presumably fall to Willie Ryan. It is a possibility which can only speed his recovery.

Fallon's third major success in little more than an hour came aboard Josie Algarhoud in the Gimcrack Stakes. The champion jockey's strength in a finish is perhaps the characteristic which punters cherish most, but here he used more gentle persuasion as his mount tried to hang in behind Sailing Shoes. The Mick Channon-trained colt responded without any need for strong pressure and eased his way home, to complete a treble which offered final proof. If any were needed, that Fallon is a jockey who has it all.



Tuning and Kieren Fallon (right) hold off Sheer Danzig (centre) in a thrilling finish to the Ebor Handicap at York yesterday

Alpsport

Sainte Marine looks the each-way saver

BY GREG WOOD

THERE IS no shortage of quantity at the better end of sprinting at present, with 17 horses lining up for today's Nunthorpe Stakes at York just a few weeks after the same number contested the July Cup at Newmarket. The matter of their quality, however, is still under debate, and there could be no

better place to settle the argument than at the Knavesmire. Dayjur and Lochsong are among the recent names to have burned themselves into the memory thanks to 56 seconds or so of concerted effort over the straight at York, and the most obvious candidate to emulate them today is Elmadim, who won the July Cup and broke the course record doing so. It has taken quite a while for

John Dunlop's runner to realise his potential, but now that he has struck winning form, he will take some beating.

Given that he may start at less than 2-1, however, it is only right to point out a few troublesome details. That course record, for instance, owed as much to the lightning-fast ground at Newmarket as it did to Elmadim's innate brilliance. Today's trip, meanwhile,

is a furlong shorter, and one over which he has yet to record a win at any level.

In the circumstances, an each-way alternative is required, and one runner in particular appears significantly overpriced. Sainte Marine (last best 3.10) finished only fifth in the King's Stand Stakes at Royal Ascot, but was badly drawn and unsuited by the ground. Her form in France

gives her every chance of a place at least, and the 12-1 with Coral is definitely worth having.

The Lower Stakes brings together too many fillies with good expectations to bet with confidence, although Mythical Girl (2.35) is probably the best of them. Opt instead for JAAZ-IM (nap 2.05) - front-runners have been very difficult to pass this week - and the progressive Sugarfoot (3.45).

YORK

HYPERION

- 2.05 ROBBY BOWL (nap)
2.35 BINT ALLAY (nb)
3.10 Elmadim
3.45 Generous Roli

- 4.15 Stravinsky
4.45 Kadaka
5.15 Mampari

GOING: Firm

STALLS: 56, 61 & 71 - stands side; round course - inside. DRAW ADVANTAGE: None.

Left-Handed, U-shaped course. Flat and ideal for the powerful gallop.

Course is 1m 5 of only on Ascot. York station 1m. ADMIRALTY: County Stand C35 (15-25 year-olds 18); Terrace 177; Silver Ring 35 (OAPs £2.50); Course Enclosure C3 (OAPs £1.50). Under-16s free all enclosures. CAR PARK: £2, remainder free.

LEADING TRAINERS: 19th Sir David W. Elmsley (2000 runners, 22.5%); 20th Sir Henry Cecil (1999 runners, 22.5%); 21st Sir John Gosden (1998 runners, 22.5%); 22nd Sir Michael Stoute (1997 runners, 22.5%); 23rd Sir John Gosden (1996 runners, 22.5%); 24th Sir John Gosden (1995 runners, 22.5%); 25th Sir John Gosden (1994 runners, 22.5%); 26th Sir John Gosden (1993 runners, 22.5%); 27th Sir John Gosden (1992 runners, 22.5%); 28th Sir John Gosden (1991 runners, 22.5%); 29th Sir John Gosden (1990 runners, 22.5%); 30th Sir John Gosden (1989 runners, 22.5%); 31st Sir John Gosden (1988 runners, 22.5%); 32nd Sir John Gosden (1987 runners, 22.5%); 33rd Sir John Gosden (1986 runners, 22.5%); 34th Sir John Gosden (1985 runners, 22.5%); 35th Sir John Gosden (1984 runners, 22.5%); 36th Sir John Gosden (1983 runners, 22.5%); 37th Sir John Gosden (1982 runners, 22.5%); 38th Sir John Gosden (1981 runners, 22.5%); 39th Sir John Gosden (1980 runners, 22.5%); 40th Sir John Gosden (1979 runners, 22.5%); 41st Sir John Gosden (1978 runners, 22.5%); 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European Athletics Championships: The continent's leading 200 metres runner could join a rare breed of Scottish winners

Walker's run increases the pressure

By MIKE ROWBOTTOM
in Budapest

DOUG WALKER steps out today into what he quaintly refers to as the amateur scene. The professional scene, according to the 25-year-old Scot with an outstanding chance of winning the 200 metres at these European Championships, takes place on grass rather than track. And usually somewhere in the Scottish border country.

Before he established himself as Europe's leading 300m runner, Walker had established himself as a prolific winner of handicap sprints — many of them raced on grass tracks with the additional hazards of thistles and cowpats. In 1994, he won six British professional titles. The traditional New Year sprint, at Meadowbank Stadium, yielded him £4,000. His richest prize on grass was the princely sum of £350.

This season, however, as an unbeaten run of nine 300 metres including the European Cup title — has established him at a new level of achievement, he has been forced to acknowledge that his success has a price.

His plans to compete on grass at the Langholm meeting soon after the Bupa Games at Gateshead, where he beat the best of Britain's 400m runners over 300m, had to be cancelled. "I couldn't take the risk," he said, with just a tinge of regret, yesterday. He has had to come to terms with other adjustments in his lifestyle too.

Media interest in this stocky former rugby player — he played winger for the Scottish schools team which included current internationals Gregor Townsend and Craig Joiner, and appeared briefly for Heri-

ot's FP — has increased dramatically this year.

The pugnacious way in which he performed in St Petersburg to earn his European Cup success, and subsequently at Gateshead, where he pulverised a field which included Iwan Thomas and Mark Richardson, has established him as a Scottish prospect. Although that, as runners such as Tom McKean have discovered in previous years, is something of a mixed blessing. The pressure of expectation can be intense.

"But if you are a full time athlete, you can hardly complain," he said with a grin. "You do bugger all for five to six hours of the day. But there has been a lot of talk about these championships in the last two weeks. Probably too much talk." Now Walker is ready to substitute action for words, although his immediate preparations this week have been slightly vexed. A blocked road following an accident, prevented him getting his scheduled flight out here by a day.

And he has arrived with what he describes as stiffness in his knee, which he is protecting for the moment with strapping. However, Walker has been assured by Britain's medical staff that he will be able to run without pain. His obvious rivals include the Dutchman, Patrick Van Balkum, who ran 20.37sec three weeks before Walker produced his own season's best of 20.35sec in winning the AAA trials at Birmingham.

There is also a Dutch connection with another potential threat, Troy Douglas, the former Bermudian athlete who has switched nationality after getting married in Holland. Douglas has a best of 20.30, although he has only run 20.6 so far this year.

Walker will also be expecting a serious challenge from his own team mates, Doug Turner and Julian Golding.

The 23-year-old has had what he describes as a "roller coaster" season, performing very well in the indoor season before making disappointing showing in the European indoor championships. His outdoor form has improved gradually, but a good performance in Sheffield on 8 August has sent him into these championships in good heart. And, as he showed last season in anchoring the British sprint relay team to a bronze in the world championships, he is a championship performer.

Golding, who has a personal best of 20.28sec from last year, believes that all three Britons can reach the final, after which the medals will be up for grabs.

"It's a psychological war game out there," he said. "Assuming you are in reasonable shape, this sport is 80 per cent mental, 20 per cent physical. As long as you are in shape here, and confident, you can achieve." And if your opponents fear you, Golding added, it is even better. He recalled that, soon after he had arrived, an opponent had come up to him and asked if Walker was still running, and he had confirmed that he was.

"The others are scared of Doug, which is a big advantage," Golding said. "I am not scared of him. I respect him."

Whether feared or respected, Walker has the opportunity this week to establish himself alongside the likes of Alan Paterson, David Jenkins, Tom McKean and Yvonne Murray in a sparse list of previous Scottish champions at these Championships.



Britain's Allison Curbishley (right) leads Ireland's Karen Shinkins in the heats for the 400 metres in Budapest yesterday

Michael Probst/AP

Mitchell faces two-year drug ban

DENNIS MITCHELL, the American sprinter under investigation for alleged doping offences, has tested positive for excessive levels of testosterone in his second urine sample, the International Amateur Athletic Federation confirmed in Budapest yesterday.

The original, or A sample, exceeded the limit for the male hormone following an out-of-competition test on 1 April in Gainesville, Florida. An IAAF spokesman, Giorgio Reineri, said that the B sample, taken from the same urine and examined at a laboratory in Montreal, was also over the limit. Mitchell, the 1992 Olympic

bronze medalist at 100 metres, will be banned for two years unless he wins an appeal before the three-member Doping Hearing Board of USA Track and Field.

Mitchell, twice a bronze medalist at the World Championships and a member of the two US teams that share the world record in the 400m relay, is also president of USA's Athletes Advisory Committee, the athletes' voice in the national governing body. The committee has taken a hard stance against doping.

Australian Olympic officials were facing the embarrassment of a drugs scandal yesterday just 24 hours before they confront International Olympic chiefs to push for the introduction of tough new laws on doping.

The Australian Olympic Committee confirmed newspaper reports that an Australian athlete had tested positive for a banned substance, but would not name the competitor nor the sport.

The news came just as Kewas Gosper, the Australian delegate to the International Olympic Committee, was preparing to present to the IOC's executive board in Switzerland an Australian proposal to tackle drugs in sport.

RESULTS FROM THE EUROPEAN ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS

MEN

100M

Semi-finals: Qualifiers for final. Heat 1: 10.27: 1. D. Chambers (GB) 10.27; 2. M. B. (GB) 10.27; 3. A. (GB) 10.27; 4. A. (GB) 10.27; 5. A. (GB) 10.27; 6. A. (GB) 10.27; 7. A. (GB) 10.27; 8. A. (GB) 10.27; 9. A. (GB) 10.27; 10. A. (GB) 10.27; 11. A. (GB) 10.27; 12. A. (GB) 10.27; 13. A. (GB) 10.27; 14. A. (GB) 10.27; 15. A. (GB) 10.27; 16. A. (GB) 10.27; 17. A. (GB) 10.27; 18. A. (GB) 10.27; 19. A. (GB) 10.27; 20. A. (GB) 10.27; 21. A. (GB) 10.27; 22. A. (GB) 10.27; 23. A. (GB) 10.27; 24. A. (GB) 10.27; 25. A. (GB) 10.27; 26. A. (GB) 10.27; 27. A. (GB) 10.27; 28. A. (GB) 10.27; 29. A. (GB) 10.27; 30. A. (GB) 10.27; 31. A. (GB) 10.27; 32. A. (GB) 10.27; 33. A. (GB) 10.27; 34. A. (GB) 10.27; 35. A. (GB) 10.27; 36. A. (GB) 10.27; 37. A. (GB) 10.27; 38. A. (GB) 10.27; 39. A. (GB) 10.27; 40. A. (GB) 10.27; 41. A. (GB) 10.27; 42. A. (GB) 10.27; 43. A. (GB) 10.27; 44. A. (GB) 10.27; 45. A. (GB) 10.27; 46. A. (GB) 10.27; 47. A. (GB) 10.27; 48. A. (GB) 10.27; 49. A. (GB) 10.27; 50. A. 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SPORT

ENGLAND'S FINAL RECKONING P18 • HENMAN ON THE MARCH P21

European Athletics Championship: Britain's 400 metres trio advance despite misjudgement of Solomon

Wariso able to survive his stupidity

BY MIKE ROWBOTTOM
in Budapest

SOLOMON WARISO went to the edge of the precipice, looked over, and stepped back again here yesterday.

The man who earned the third 400 metres place at these European Championships at the expense of Roger Black came within hundredths of a second of what would have been an ignominious exit after he slowed too soon in his opening heat and failed to gain one of the three automatic qualifying places for today's semi-finals, for which Britain's other entrants, Mark Richardson and Iwan Thomas, qualified comfortably.

The misjudgement of Solomon occurred 50 metres from the line, apparently secure in third place, he looked around him in exaggerated fashion and slowed, allowing Jan Padebradsky of the Czech Republic to pass him. Wariso had no time to respond, finishing fourth in 46.27sec to the Czech's 46.16.

There followed 20 minutes in Wariso's life that he will least want to remember. Venting his frustration by slamming his shoes on to the floor, he settled down to watch his fate determined by the three subsequent heats, hoping to progress as one of the four fastest losers.

His viewing was interrupted by the harshly jesting tones of Britain's former promotions officer, Andy Norman. "Get up Solomon," he said. "You've got to run again tomorrow. If you're lucky. Come on, get up. We'll take you outside and shoot you." Wariso did get his run, despite an uncomfortably fast final heat in which the fourth-placed runner matched his time.

After the controversy of his selection for the individual event here, following his performance in the AAA trials,

where he beat Black to third place by 0.03sec in what was his first 400 metres appearance in an outdoor championship, Wariso arrived at this event under unusual pressure. It was not necessarily fair, but it was a fact.

"I thought I would probably go through because of my time," he said. "But you can't be sure of these things. I saw some of the guys running personal bests." In his defence, Wariso said that he did not relish running in the morning.

"I had to get up at six this morning, and I don't run well early," he said.

However, he is now through. And having reduced his personal best by more than a second to 44.68 in the AAA final, this 31-year-old is talented enough to make up for his near lapse with another impressive performance.

Wariso's fortune was not shared by his colleague, Nick Buckfield. The 35-year-old pole vaulter from Crawley, who only made the trip out here following a last minute fitness test, landed badly in the pit during the qualifying competition and injured his back.

He was taken to hospital, where X-rays showed he had sustained no serious damage, but he returned, shaken, to the British team hotel with severe bruising to his hip.

It was a miserable exit for an athlete who had not been able to compete since improving his British record to 5.80m in Crete on 27 May, due to a knee injury which was eventually treated by the Swiss doctor, Roland Biedert, whose clinic has previously been used by athletes such as Roger Black and Sally Gunnell.

Diane Modahl, seeking to reach her first major 800m championship final since winning her appeal against a four-year doping ban, failed narrowly, finishing one position

outside the four qualifying places with a time of 2min 00.08sec, just behind Natalya Dukhnova of Belarus, who recorded 1.59.55.

Aleksandr Bagach of the Ukraine, who had sparked an appeal after winning the shot putt the previous night because of the weighted bindings around his calls which might have assisted his speed of turning in the circle, was allowed to keep his gold medal by the official jury.

Another competitor who had cause to be thankful to the officials was Italy's Stephano Tili, who was disqualified after appearing to get through the previous day's second round of the 100 metres. His offence was unusual - after an altercation with a track marshal, he had struck the man's hat from his head. But he was allowed back into the event after apologising.

The National Anthem played for the first time at these championships after Tanni Grey won the 800m wheelchair race in a time of 2min 06.68sec, holding off the challenge of Germany's Lilly Angreny and Sweden's Sofia Dettmann.

It was the first European title of an illustrious career for the 29-year-old from Birmingham, who has been competing at international level for 13 years and won the gold medal in this event at the Atlanta Paralympics of 1996.

Christine Arron of France won the women's 100m title in a European record of 10.73sec, after overhauling Russia's fast-starting defending champion, Irina Privalova, who took the silver in a time of 10.83.

Arron, with a distinctively dyed ginger hair, comes from Guadeloupe, birth-place of France's world and Olympic 400m champion, Marie-Jose Perec.

Walker's run, results, page 22



Solomon Wariso, of Britain, on his way to narrow qualification in the 400 metres heats yesterday

AFP

Ferguson nearly out of time to buy Yorke

FOOTBALL

BY DAVID ANDERSON

MANCHESTER UNITED are running out of time in their attempts to sign Dwight Yorke before tonight's European Champions' League deadline.

United have until midnight to prise the striker away from Aston Villa - and register him in time to spearhead the club's assault on Europe's main club competition - but their manager, Alex Ferguson, admitted yesterday their hopes are fading.

"It looks like it's at a dead end," conceded Ferguson. United are still hopeful of signing the player and will make every effort to do so before the deadline expires. Yorke, 26, has said he would like to join United, but only if he can play in the Champions' League if he does so.

Villa are determined to hold on to him and have rejected bids of £8m and £10m for the Trinidad and Tobago international, whom they have priced at £16m. United have so far refused to be held to ransom and have shown no signs of meeting the asking price.

Villa may be ready to do business if Andy Cole was offered as part of any deal, but, according to United, that is a not an option. The Midlands club have admitted they may be forced to sell Yorke at the end of the season, when he will have just one year remaining on his contract. He has refused the offer of a new deal, which would have made him the highest paid player in the club's history, and could walk away in two years' time on a free transfer under the Bosman ruling.

Chelsea have turned down a bid from Nottingham Forest to exchange Pierre Van Hooijdonk for Chelsea's Norwegian World Cup striker, Tore Andre Flo. The Chelsea manager, Gianluca Vialli, however, is considering a £3.5m bid from Forest for the Blues' defender, Michael Duberry.

The Forest manager, Dave Bassett, said: "Flo is a player I admire greatly and he would have been an ideal replacement for Van Hooijdonk. Unfortunately, Chelsea weren't interested in taking Pierre."

More football, page 23

RFU listen as clubs stand firm

RUGBY UNION

BY CHRIS HEWETT

BRIAN BAISTER was inching his way slowly along rugby's diplomatic tightrope last night, acutely aware that one false move would reposition that rope somewhere in the vicinity of his neck. The chairman of the Rugby Football Union's management board met with a high-powered delegation of English club owners and chief executives and bought himself some time by agreeing to take their demands for the immediate establishment of a British league back to his colleagues at Twickenham.

The management board went into emergency session last night, charged with the task of finding a way out of the political impasse threatening to tear the domestic game asunder. The clubs' stance could hardly be more black and white: either the RFU and, by extension, the Welsh and Scottish Rugby Unions, give their blessing to a new cross-border tournament for the coming campaign, now just 16 days away, or England's leading Premiership sides openly defy the authorities by playing a season-long series of friendlies against Cardiff and Swansea, the disident Welsh teams at the centre of the latest ructions.

Baister appeared to soften his position yesterday by agreeing to last night's meeting; on Tuesday evening, he re-em-

phasised his opposition to the early formation of a British league, dismissing it as "impractical". The chairman, elected last month after a bitter scrap with Cliff Brittle, an unashamed hardliner, supports the principle of an elite cross-border tournament but is under pressure both from the International Rugby Board, the governing body of the sport worldwide, and his more conservative RFU colleagues, who believe the clubs are acting outside the spirit and letter of the so-called Mayfair Agreement, a peace deal signed in May.

Club sources described last night's meeting as the "cut-off point", insisting that no further delay would be countenanced. But even if the RFU turned full circle and agreed to back a British league, they would still have to seek agreement with their fellow unions before seeking consent from the IRB. "Wherever you look in this game, people have painted themselves into a corner," said one RFU member yesterday. "I cannot for the life of me see a way out of this one."

Unauthorised games between English and Welsh clubs would inevitably involve rebel referees. Ed Morrison, the world's leading international official, ruled out any possibility of his participating in an unsanctioned match, but Hugh Banfield, the secretary of the Welsh Society of Referees, said yesterday: "There may be some refs here who have had enough

of the WRU. The clubs will need people of high calibre for such a level of rugby, but I suppose it comes down to who pays the most money."

Meanwhile, the Australian Rugby Union underlined their public dissatisfaction with the performance of an under-strength England team in Brisbane in June by refusing Clive Woodward's side a second Test Down Under next summer. England will definitely play the Wallabies in Sydney on 26 June, but John O'Neill, the chief executive of the ARU, has decreed that the only extra match on offer is against the Australian Barbarians or the country's leading Super 12 state.

Only the Springboks could boast a welcome outbreak of harmony yesterday. Silas Nkanunu, a lawyer from Port Elizabeth, will become the first black president of the South African Rugby Football Union next month, filling the substantial gap left by Louis Luyt's forced resignation earlier this year. Nkanunu's 30-year commitment to the game in Eastern Province, the most enlightened multi-racial union in the country, ensured that his nomination would go forward unchallenged.

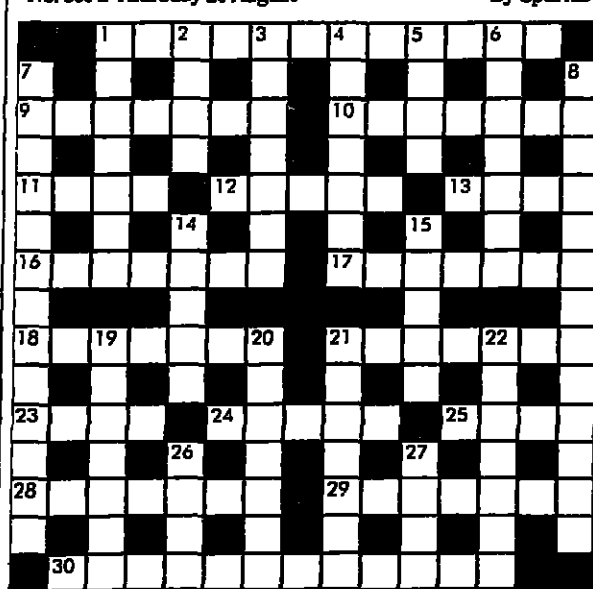
Leicester's England Under-21 international full-back or wing Tim Barlow is set to become the new Bristol rugby director, Bob Dwyer's first signing, after agreeing terms with the Allied Dunbar Premiership Two club.

THE THURSDAY CROSSWORD

No. 3694, Thursday 20 August

By Spurius

Wednesday's solution



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1 Area where there's a lot of attention to details? (6,5)
2 Place one's found in Derby, say, somewhat tucked away? (7)
3 On reflection, a furrow in a country road mostly would be seen as normal (7)
4 Body of troops who'd vanished in detective story? (4)
5 In a sense, a great deal (5)
6 Step one takes softly to begin with (4)
7 Flowers for Hilda as arranged (7)
8 Bladed weapon man initially tried to bring into club (7)

9 Revolutionary type of tyre contains carbon (7)
10 College girl in charge of horse-race (7)
11 Bath fitted with a bit of brass (4)
12 Pass into law bill to expand hospital department (5)
13 Dog takes time and trouble (4)
14 Historical record church member found in a busy environment (7)
15 Old science graduate joining Yorkshire Water is relatively unknown (7)
16 Doctor's qualification for identifying a type of murder? (6,6)
17 Bring out book on Israel that's sent up in press (7)

1 Value half of treasure, roughly (4)
2 Describes what farmer's wife does? (7)
3 Check that's necessary in slinging hammock (7)
4 Reluctant to dismiss student for one instance of bad language (4)
5 Tell new arrival to meet at either side of entrance (7)
6 One of those keeping up the habit? (8-5)
7 Line in dull epic been controversially censored? (4-9)
8 Seeing that church puts an end to wrongdoing (5)
9 Bit of a rough-house? (5)
10 Collapse occasioned by a bleed - opening of cut, unfortunately (7)
11 Source of oil produced in Leeds (7)
12 Going around on bike in a storm (7)
13 Moral standing's certainly required to suppress pretentious rubbish (7)
14 Writer, one entertained by brother (4)
15 Autocrat from South America engaged in transactions (4)

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